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THE COMPLETE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

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THE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

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1905

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VOLUME XIX

THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

AND

THE QUEEN OF THE AIR

WITH OTHER PAPERS AND LECTURES
ON ART AND LITERATURE

1860–1870

334128

THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

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Note.—Of the drawings reproduced in this volume, six have appeared before. No. VIII. was reproduced by autotype process as Plate I. in the large-paper edition of E. T. Cook's *Studies in Ruskin*; and, by half-tone process, in the *Magazine of Art*, April 1900. No. XIX. was Plate I. (chromolithograph) in *Verona and Other Lectures* (1894). No. XXI. was Plate X. in the same book, and No. XXII. was Plate VI. The two subjects included in No. XXIV. were Plates VII. and VIII. in the same book, and No. XXV. was Plate V.

Of the drawings, those of the *frontispiece* and of Plates VI. and VII. are permanently exhibited on the walls of the Ruskin Drawing School, Oxford, while others are in the cabinets of the same collection. That of Plate VIII. was shown at the Ruskin Exhibition at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, 1901 (No. 6), and at the Ruskin Exhibition, Manchester, 1904 (No. 306); that of Plate XII. was No. 216 at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, and No. 437 in the Bradford Exhibition of 1904; that of Plate XIX. was No. 232 at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, No. 313 at Manchester, and No. 172 in the Coniston Exhibition of 1900; that of Plate XX. was No. 439 at Bradford; that of Plate XXI. (in the collection of Mr. T. F. Taylor) was No. 312 at Manchester; that of Plate XXII. was No. 116 at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours; of those in Plate XXIV., the Madonna (in the collection of Mr. T. F. Taylor) was No. 316 at Manchester, and the Can Grande was No. 264 at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours.

INTRODUCTION TO VOL. XIX

THIS is a volume of miscellanies, collecting the papers and a book written by Ruskin on artistic and literary subjects between 1865 and 1869, together with one paper of an earlier date. It contains three lectures of considerable interest which have not hitherto been published, and presents in a complete form a series of papers on the laws of art, hitherto so attainable only in the back numbers of a periodical.

The contents of the volume, which are arranged chronologically, are as follow:—

I. A paper on *Sir Joshua and Holbein*, which originally appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* for March 1860.—This is a chapter which was crowded out from the last volume of *Modern Painters*, and recalls in style and treatment the chapters in that volume which contrast Dürer and Salvator, Wouvermans and Angelico, or Rubens and Paul Veronese. If the reader will compare § 15 of this paper (p. 12) with the chapter in *Modern Painters* describing the difference in the outlook of Dürer and Holbein on the one side, and of Salvator on the other,[1] he will see at once that the passage upon Holbein must have been written at the same time and with the same ideas in the author's mind.

II. A paper on *The Study of Architecture in Schools*, read to the Royal Institute of British Architects on May 15, 1865.—Into this paper Ruskin compressed much that was most deeply felt in his theory of the place of the fine arts in human life, and the discussion which followed the reading of his paper shows the strong impression which it made at the time. "The French word *ébloui*," said one of the speakers, "was the only term which could adequately define the mixed state of surprise, delight, and general acute excitement in which the fiery essay had left him. Within the compass of a brief discourse the accomplished lecturer had handled nearly the whole scope of human philosophy, as well as of the art which it was their privilege to practise, tracing, as far as practicable, the infinite ramifications which he supposed to connect the material elements of the successful practice

[1] Part ix. ch. iv. § 4 (Vol. VII. p. 302).

of architecture with our moral natures."[1] The speaker rightly characterised the paper in noting its fiery energy and width of range; it was characteristic also in its confession of the speaker's divided counsels—continuing his pursuit of the beautiful, and yet half "seceding from the study of all art." In this respect the paper is typical, as we have already seen and shall again see presently, of Ruskin's temper at the time. The incidental references in the paper to the characteristics of Greek art, and notices of Greek coins, connect it also with other pages in the present volume.

III. *The Cestus of Aglaia*, being nine papers on the Laws of Art, with especial reference to engraving, which originally appeared in the *Art Journal* during 1865 and 1866.—Passages from these papers were afterwards incorporated by Ruskin in other books, and such passages were omitted from *The Cestus of Aglaia* when the papers were reprinted in *On the Old Road* (1885). In this edition of his writings, which is complete and chronological, it has seemed better to reprint the papers in their entirety, referring back to them in the later books. *The Cestus of Aglaia* is thus for the first time here printed in a complete and collected form; and it is accordingly furnished with a title-page and list of contents (pp. 43, 47). The papers are very characteristic, as the author himself said,[2] of one of his manners of writing; and some further remarks upon them are given lower down in this Introduction (p. lxiv.).

IV. *The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts*, a lecture delivered on Sir Robert Rede's foundation to the University of Cambridge on May 24, 1867.—This lecture, here printed from the author's MS., has not hitherto been published. The significance of it in subject is touched upon lower down (p. xxiii.); in style, it shows the note of academical state, of courtly elaboration, which was often heard in the Professor's lectures at Oxford.

V. *On the Present State of Modern Art, with Reference to the Advisable Arrangement of the National Gallery*, a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution on June 7, 1867.—This lecture also, here printed from the author's MS., has not hitherto been published, though Ruskin (as we know from a passage in *Time and Tide*[3]) had intended to include it in his Works. The practical suggestions with which it concludes were directed to purposes which he had closely at heart,

[1] The speaker was Mr. Digby Wyatt: see *Sessional Papers of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 1864–1865, p. 152.
[2] *Queen of the Air*, § 134 (below, p. 408).
[3] See Vol. XVII. p. 469.

and which foreshadowed in a remarkable way some things afterwards accomplished. In reading his suggestions for People's Palaces (§§ 25, 26), we may remember that Sir Walter Besant's *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*—the story from which the People's Palace in the Mile End Road was to spring—did not appear till fifteen years later (1882). Ruskin's suggestions of a Standard Series of art specimens (§ 29) and of a Standard Library (§ 28) were in some measure carried out by himself in his Art Collection at Oxford and in his *Bibliotheca Pastorum*. His plea for Municipal Art Galleries (§ 29) was delivered at a time when few such institutions as yet existed. Whether Ruskin would altogether have approved of the Tate Gallery may be doubted, but it is worth noting that he advocated the building of a new National Gallery on the Millbank site (§ 37). Ruskin's views on the proper co-ordination of museums and galleries—his distinction between popular and educational collections and treasure-houses of what is rich and rare — are well worth attention to-day. He returned to the subject thirteen years later in a series of letters in the *Art Journal* on "A Museum or Picture Gallery: its Functions and its Formation," and in the St. George's Museum at Sheffield he was able, on a small scale, to give an object-lesson in what he meant.

VI. *Fairy Stories*, an Introduction (written in 1868) to a re-issue of the English translation of the *Märchen* of the Brothers Grimm with Cruikshank's illustrations.—A letter written in 1883 after one of his illnesses, in which Ruskin fears that he "can never more write things rich in thought like the preface to *Grimm*,"[2] indicates the importance which he attached to this piece. Its relation to Cruikshank, and its remarks on the historical significance of mythology, connect it with other pages in the present volume.

VII. *The Flamboyant Architecture of the Valley of the Somme*, a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution on January 29, 1869.—This is a third lecture which has not hitherto been published. It is here printed from the author's MS.[3] The lecture is one of the most charming, as also perhaps one of the least discursive and most closely knit, of Ruskin's occasional discourses. Had he been able to complete his scheme for *Our Fathers have Told Us*, it is probable that he would

[1] These are reprinted in a later volume.

[2] See the letter to F. S. Ellis of June 11, 1883; at p. 66 of the privately issued *Stray Letters from Professor Ruskin to a London Bibliopole* (1892), reprinted in a later volume of this edition.

[3] It appears that Ruskin had some idea of publishing it at the time, for the readers of the *Art Journal*, 1869, p. 95, were told of "an expectation that the lecture may appear entire in our pages."

have used the lecture in the eighth part of that work, which was to be given to "the Cathedral of Rouen and the schools of architecture which it represents;[1] for Abbeville," he says elsewhere,[2] "is the preface and interpretation of Rouen." Abbeville was one of the towns to which Ruskin was most attached, and it was after a long sojourn there in 1868 that the lecture was written. He took immense pains with it, and put together an Exhibition of Fifty Paintings and Sketches to illustrate it. The Catalogue of this Exhibition is here reprinted as an appendix to the lecture (pp. 269–277); and several of Ruskin's drawings, as well as some other illustrations, are included among the plates (see below, pp. lxxv., lxxvi.).

VIII. *The Queen of the Air* (1869).—This well-known book is discussed below (pp. lxv.–lxxi.).

IX. *Verona and its Rivers*, a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution on February 5, 1870.—This lecture, written similarly after a long sojourn at Verona in 1869, is here reprinted from the volume entitled *Verona and Other Lectures*, issued in 1895. For it, as for the Abbeville lecture, Ruskin prepared an Exhibition of Fifty Drawings and Photographs; and here, again, the Catalogue is reprinted as an appendix to the lecture (pp. 449–458), and several of the illustrations are given (see pp. lxxviii., lxxix.).

Finally, in an appendix to the volume, reports are given of some minor lectures on artistic subjects (1861, 1865, 1868).

1867–1869

The writings and discourses, thus included in the present volume, comprise, as we have seen in the introduction to the preceding volume, only one side of Ruskin's work during the years in question. A passage in a letter to his mother, written from Winnington on May 25, 1868, well describes his divided allegiance:—

> "My writing is so entirely at present the picture of my mind that it seems to me as if the one must be as inscrutable as the other. For indeed I am quite unable from any present crises to judge of what is best for me to do. There is so much misery and error in the world which I see I could have immense power to set various human influences against, by giving up my science and art, and

[1] See the "General Plan of *Our Fathers have Told Us*" given in the volume containing *The Bible of Amiens*.

[2] *Præterita*, i. § 180.

wholly trying to teach peace and justice; and yet my own gifts seem so specially directed towards quiet investigation of beautiful things that I cannot make up my mind, and my writing is as vacillating as my temper."

The working compromise at which Ruskin arrived has already been indicated (Vol. XVIII., p. xx.). More and more he connected his art-teaching with moral, and even political, injunctions; in this respect the Rede Lecture is especially characteristic.

Having in the preceding Introduction traced his movements during the years 1864–1866, we now proceed to follow the outer tenor of his life and the developments of his temper during 1867, 1868, and 1869.

Ruskin's principal work in the early part of 1867 was the letters to Thomas Dixon, published later in the year as *Time and Tide* (Vol. XVII.). They were, as he says, desultory, and were written without any extreme care, for he was in a state of health which admitted of no intense concentration. His diary indicates various morbid conditions; he records many weird dreams, and notes that he sees "floating sparks in his eyes"; but it was in the life of the affections that he was most suffering.[1] Alternations of disappointment and hope, chagrin, anxiety, and the weariness of waiting—these were the causes of the despondency, sleeplessness, and nervous prostration from which he often suffered, and which caused him to write to a young artist friend, to whom at this time he opened his heart, that he was "dying slowly." Ruskin, more even than most men of wayward genius, coloured his writings with his moods, and readers of the letters to Dixon in a previous volume will already have noted in them many a sign of irritability and gloom. He found relief in drawing, and several of the studies of birds and shells which now form part of the Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford were done in the early part of 1867. Some extracts from his diary record the progress of his studies in this sort, and show how much pains he took with them:—

"1867. *Jan.* 17.—Painting pheasant—large: a singularly good and bright day.

"*Jan.* 18.—Finished pheasant satisfactorily, though day foggy.

"*Jan.* 20.—Got on with partridge.

"*Jan.* 21.—Finished partridge; three birds in a week. I began smallest pheasant on Tuesday last; on Wednesday finished it and began the large one. Thursday and Friday, worked hard at large

[1] References to this thread in Ruskin's life occur on pp. xxxviii., lix.; the story is already partly familiar to readers of *Præterita* (iii. ch. iii.).

one. Saturday, finished it (all but done on Friday), and began partridge; yesterday worked hard and to-day harder and finished it: the best of the three.

"*Jan.* 22.—Hard to work again on my partridge's bill to-day, but got it right.

"*Jan.* 23.—Got a bit of snipe nicely done.

"*Jan.* 24.—Finished snipe all but wing.

"*Jan.* 25.—Bettered my snipe's wing.

"*Jan.* 26.—Angry in morning and unhappy all day, but painted teal's head wonderfully.

"*Jan.* 28.—Worked hard at teal in morning.

"*Jan.* 29.—Finished teal, successfully."

A study of a wild duck, probably the finest of Ruskin's drawings of birds, is now included in the collections of the British Museum.[1] Reproductions of it and of some similar studies will be found in later volumes.

He was busy too, at this time, with schemes of practical benevolence. "Plan cottage life," he notes in his diary (March 14), "and help to poor, if spared; Joanna very happy about it." Other entries record visits from Miss Octavia Hill, doubtless on the business of his housing schemes, to which reference has already been made.[2] These schemes which Miss Hill originated with Ruskin's help have borne fruit in the reclamation of some of the worst areas in London.

"They aroused public opinion," writes a friend of their author,[3] "stimulated legislation, and turned the attention of philanthropists and capitalists in the direction of providing civilised dwellings for the poor. Miss Hill's recommendations and methods have spread to most of the cities and crowded towns of Great Britain, and have been adopted in America and in many European countries. . . . The 'grain of mustard seed,' from which the sturdy plant of housing reform sprang, was first planted in Ruskin's house at Denmark Hill. One day he and Miss Octavia Hill were having a friendly chat, and he lamented the dreariness of life without an object other than the usual daily round. 'I paint, take my mother for a drive, dine with friends or answer these correspondents,' said Mr. Ruskin, drawing a heap of letters from his pocket with a rueful face, 'but one longs to do something more satisfying.' 'Most of us feel like that at times,' said his visitor. 'Well, what would you like to be doing?' asked Ruskin.

[1] It was "B. 295" in *Guide to an Exhibition of Drawings and Sketches by Old Masters and Deceased Masters of the English School*, 1901.

[2] See *Time and Tide*, § 148 (Vol. XVII. p. 437).

[3] Sarah A. Tooley in the *Daily Chronicle*, July 24, 1905.

'Something to provide better homes for the poor,' was Miss Octavia Hill's quick reply. The idea seemed to strike Ruskin, and, turning sharp round in his seat, he asked: 'How could it be done? Have you a business plan?'

"Miss Hill was only a girl at the time, but was impressed by Mr. Ruskin's desire that the scheme should pay. He said if she could make it do so the work would spread. After further consideration, Mr. Ruskin provided the working capital, and Miss Hill became the happy landlady of three dirty and neglected houses, in the neighbourhood of her own home, in the Marylebone Road. . . . Personal management was the keynote then as it is now of Miss Hill's work, and from the first she collected the rents herself and made friends with her tenants. I have heard Miss Hill describe how, in those early days, she climbed dark stairways covered with every kind of dirt and abomination, and grasped her rent-bag tightly when in the darkness some evil-looking face suddenly appeared. But never once was she robbed or insulted. The people trusted her from the first, and when they learned that almsgiving was not a part of her scheme, and that no arrears of rent were allowed, began to take a pride in cultivating self-respect and independence. Money was spent to make the houses decently habitable, overcrowding was discouraged by letting two-roomed tenements for little more than had been charged for one room, but the net profits on the property were not reduced because no arrears were allowed. The financial result was that at the end of a year and a half the scheme had paid five per cent. revenue, and had repaid £48 of the capital. Miss Hill's labour was gratuitous, but she put aside the percentage which a collector would have charged and devoted it to beneficent purposes. Mr. Ruskin's faith in her was amply justified, and under his advice and encouragement Miss Hill took an increasing number of courts under her management, and so her work grew."

Ruskin referred to Miss Hill's labours in one of his public lectures of this year (see p. 213, below).

He saw much, during these months, of Carlyle, Froude, and Helps; the gentle wisdom of the author of *Friends in Council* was perhaps more helpful to his mood than the stimulus, through thunder and lightning, of Carlyle. How strongly Helps sympathised with Ruskin's social aims, how greatly he admired the devotion which inspired them, is shown in the dedication of *Conversations on War and Culture*.[1] A letter of a somewhat later date in this same year (1867) shows the germ in Ruskin's mind of those practical efforts towards social regeneration which were presently to take shape in *Fors Clavigera* and "St. George's

[1] Now given in a note to *The Eagle's Nest*, § 208 (Vol. XXI.).

Guild." It was written to a Yorkshire correspondent and friend, who desires to remain anonymous:—

"Denmark Hill, S., *15th May*, '67.

"It was very nice of you to wait till I had done with those letters, though I can't even yet write for a little while, for I have two most troublesome lectures to write, one for Cambridge and one for London;[1] but I shall be nearly free by the 7th of next month, I hope. . . .

"I am very glad of your letter, in all ways. Do you know, I think the end of it will be that any of us who have yet hearts sound enough must verily and in deed draw together and initiate a true and wholesome way of life, in defiance of the world,[2] and with laws which we will vow to obey, and endeavour to make others, by our example, accept. I think it must come to this, but accidents of my own life have prevented me until lately from being able to give to such a plan any practical hope; but now I might, with some help, be led on to its organization. Would you join it, and vow to keep justice and judgment and the peace of God on this earth?

"Ever affectionately yours,

"J. Ruskin."

For inner consolation, meanwhile, in hours of suffering and anxiety Ruskin turned, as his diary shows, to the Bible. He tried, daily for some months, to cast his horoscope, and to be guided and strengthened, by *Sortes Biblicæ*. Thus on May 15 we read, "Open at 'Behold, we have left all and followed thee'"; on May 19, "Open in evening at 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life'"; and on August 14, "'Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, wherefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness'"; and again, on the same day, "Opened at Isaiah xxxiii. 17: 'Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off.' My old Bible often *does* open there, but it was a happy first reading." Other entries here follow (as in some other similar pages of the diary), which seem to show that he enumerated methodically such good things as befell him, in accord with his Bible readings:—

"By Grasmere and St. John's Vale to Keswick. (*a*) Met poor woman at Wythburn and helped her. (*b*) Crossed my forehead three times with the waters of the spring at St. John's Chapel.

[1] The lectures here printed, pp. 163–229.

[2] In a later letter to the same correspondent (May 21) Ruskin qualifies these words thus: "I do not in the least propose any onslaught on public opinion or custom in any violent way; but only, the observance of certain laws which may be seen to be exemplary in their working."

(*c*) Conquered petty anxiety; forded brook, and found good of it. (*d*) Drank healths after dinner—seven. (*e*) Out on lake in evening. Fell asleep in boat near St. Herbert's. Glorious sky of *broken* white silvery jagged-edged clouds."

This last entry has taken us forward to Ruskin's summer holiday. In May he had given the Rede Lecture at Cambridge (pp. 163–194), and received there an honorary degree. He writes a pleasant account of the ceremony to his mother (May 23), knowing how much it would please her, and signs it "Ever, my dearest mother, your most affectionate son, J. Ruskin, LL.D." He notes the Public Orator's "Latin laudatory speech (recommendatory of you for the honour of degree), some ten or fifteen minutes long; in my case, there being nothing particular to rehearse, except that I had written books 'exquisite in language and faultlessly pure in contention with evil principles.'" The orator, he adds, "dwelt more on *The Crown of Wild Olive* than on any other of my books, which pleased me, as it was the last." Then, a fortnight later, he had a lecture to deliver at the Royal Institution (pp. 197–229). Both lectures were successful, but such exercises were hardly to be commended as tonics for overwrought nerves; so he determined, after a visit to Osborne Gordon at Easthampstead Rectory, in Berkshire, to seek rest and refreshment, if such might be, in the English lakeland which had given him so many happy days in his boyhood, and which was to be the home of his later years.[1] At first the contrast between old times and new—between the recollections of the unclouded home of childhood and the burden and the mystery of later knowledge and suffering, and the sight, moreover, of new hotels and fouled streams—saddened him, as letters to his mother show:—

"Lowwood, Windermere, *Sunday morning, June* 30.—It is all very painful and saddening to me. But I am absolutely in want of fresh air and idleness, and *must* take them as a nasty medicine, though I would incomparably rather be working amongst the camphor and ambergris of insects and mummies in the British Museum, and deciphering wing-scales and hieroglyphics, if I could, or working all day long in my own mineral room. But I cannot, and must walk and strive to banish sad thoughts as best I can. I feel a *little* bettering in strength, already."

"I have the secret," he writes to his mother later (July 16), "of extracting sadness from all things, instead of joy, which is no enviable

[1] His itinerary was as follows: Greta Bridge (June 28), Lowwood (June 30), Bowness (July 1), Huntley Burn (July 2), Keswick (July 4), Carlisle (July 10), Wigtown (July 11), Keswick (July 16), Waterhead, on Windermere (August 7), Keswick (August 15), Matlock (August 23), Denmark Hill (August 24).

talisman. Forgive me if I ever write in a way that may pain you. It is best that you should know, when I write cheerfully, it is no pretended cheerfulness; so when I am sad, I think it right to confess it."[1]

"CROWN HOTEL, BOWNESS,
"*Monday morning, 1st July*, '67.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—Lowwood was too noisy and fashionable (Manchester fashion) for me, so I drove over here yesterday, and got a lovely little corner-parlour in, I believe, your old Inn, though I am confused about it, the view seeming to me so much more beautiful than it did then. But the change in myself, and in all things connected with me, is so great and so sorrowful to me that I can hardly bear the places. It is very different—having you laid up at home, and my father dead, and myself old and ill—from running about the hills, with both of you expecting me home to tea, and I myself as lithe as a stag. I would give anything to be back at home at work on my minerals. But I have no doubt the fresh air and exercise are not only good for me, but vitally necessary just now, so I must endure my rest and liberty with patience. I had a pleasant row across the lake last night, and it is all very lovely. I went up and examined Mr. Richmond's estate before dinner, the father and son (of the farm) showing me everything with great courtesy and niceness. It is very beautiful, but the railroad station, not a mile distant, is a fatal eyesore. If Mr. Richmond builds the house at all for me, my principal study room must be at the back, looking *up* to the rocks and the wild roses (very lovely, both, just now), and only the company room looking to the great view—a very noble one, *but* for the railroad, and having the advantage of endless study of magnificent sunset. I am much struck by the fiery purity and power of the *northern* sky. Last night it was more like an Aurora Borealis than mere sunset; the fire seemed *in* the clouds, and there is hardly any night. It is twilight till eleven, and clear dawn at two (as I know—to my discomfort when sleepless). I hope to reach Huntley Burn about 5 o'clock to-day. I leave this note behind me here, to be sure of post.

"Ever, my dearest mother,
"Your most affectionate Son,
"J. RUSKIN.

"I will send you an envelope from Huntley Burn. I can't to-day, because I don't know if I shall choose to stay longer than a day there (supposing they ask me), it depends so much on their ways."

[1] This extract is reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 242 (1900 ed.), where it is incorporated in a letter of July 19.

It will be noticed in this letter that Ruskin already had some vague idea of settling in the Lake Country. After a few days on Windermere, Ruskin went to pay his visit to Lady Henry Kerr at Huntley Burn, on the Scottish Border, close to Abbotsford. He enjoyed the company of his hosts, and recollections of it came back to him in after years. "Will you forgive my connecting the personal memory," he said in one of his last Oxford lectures, "of having once had a wild rose gathered for me, in the glen of Thomas the Rhymer, by the daughter of one of the few remaining Catholic houses of Scotland, with the pleasure I have in reading to you this following true account of the origin of the name of St. Cuthbert's birthplace;—the rather because I owe it to friendship of the same date, with Mr. Cockburn Muir, of Melrose?"[1] But Ruskin found the routine of a visit tiresome, and soon returned to solitude. The hills and moors brought him increase of strength:—

"KESWICK, *2nd July*, 1867.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I have your nice line of yesterday. . . . The letter from Mr. Brown of Venice[2] contained nothing particular, but he is quite well.

"I had a really fine walk yesterday, discovering two pieces of mountain scenery hitherto unknown to me, and very truly noble—buttress of rock on the flanks of Grasmere, between this lake and Crummock water, which may compare not disadvantageously with many pieces of Swiss scenery. I was delighted to find them, as it is always good to have a motive for one's walks, and I shall want to see these on all sides. The weather was delightful—though sudden and mysterious blasts of wind came up through the gorges, the *tops* of the hills were all in perfect repose. I had rather a severe walk of five hours, without stopping more than twenty minutes in all (I never drew bridle once, from here to Grasmere top—five miles, and 2800 feet up), and came in very fresh and frightfully hungry, so I must certainly be gaining strength.

"Your letter to-day is very prettily written, so you are certainly not *losing* it.

"Ever, my dearest mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN.

"I take some pains with my writing, but am always shocked to look at it afterwards. I had a botanist breakfasting with me to-day who wrote a most beautiful hand, but he was one lump of pleasant active egotism—utterly *in*sensitive, and I fancy my broken hand comes partly of sensitiveness, which I should be sorry to lose."

[1] *Pleasures of England*, § 66.

[2] Rawdon Brown: see below, p. liv.

There are frequent apologies in the letters to his mother, now and earlier, for bad handwriting. She was somewhat of a precisian in all things, and doubtless told John to mind his *ps* and *qs*; at the present time, too, her sight was failing. She could never quite realise, moreover, that her boy was grown up, and she wrote to him on this occasion, "hoping that he always had some one with him on his mountain rambles." Ruskin next went for a few days on a visit to Miss Agnew's home at Wigtown, where she was now taking a brief holiday. Shortly afterwards she returned to Denmark Hill, and Ruskin used to send, to amuse her, the familiar "rhymed travelling letters," of which he has printed a specimen or two in *Præterita*.[1] He himself returned again to Keswick, moving from the Royal Oak Inn in the town to the old Derwentwater Hotel on the margin of the lake:—

"KESWICK, *19th July*, '67.
"*Afternoon—half-past three.*

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—As this is the last post before Sunday, I send one more line to say I've had a delightful forenoon's walk—since half-past ten, by St. John's Vale—and had pleasant thoughts, and found one of the most variedly beautiful torrent beds I ever saw in my life, and I feel that I gain strength, slowly but certainly, every day; the great good of the place is that I can be content without going on great excursions which fatigue and do me harm (or else worry me with problems). I am *content* here with the road-side hedges and streams, and this contentment is the great thing for health; and there is hardly anything to annoy me of absurd or calamitous human doing, but still the ancient cottage life—very rude, and miserable enough in its torpor—but clean and calm, not a vile cholera and plague of bestirred pollution, like back streets of London. There is also much more real and deep beauty than I expected to find, in some of the minor pieces of scenery and in the cloud effects. . . .

"Ever, my dearest Mother,
"Your most affectionate Son,
"J. RUSKIN.

"But please don't say where I am to anybody. I like to be utterly *free*—to be able to get off anywhere at any moment."[2]

Ruskin had his servant Crawley with him on this tour, and he now sent for Downs, the gardener at Denmark Hill, in order to give him

[1] See i. § 163 (where in the current editions "1857" should be corrected to "1867").
[2] Reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 242 (1900 edition).

also a glimpse of the Lake Country. His mother's hope was often realised, for on many of the walks described in later letters, Ruskin was attended by Downs "hunting up ferns" and Crawley "carrying my rock specimens" (August 11). It was characteristic of Ruskin that many of his movements were arranged in order to show Downs this, and enable Downs to do that. It was characteristic also that, before starting on his own holiday, he had sent his assistants, Mr. George Allen and Mr. William Ward, on a sketching and walking tour in the Meuse country.[1] Letters to his mother describe many of his own rambles:[2]—

> "(*July* 30.)—Downs arrived yesterday quite comfortable and in fine weather. It is not bad this morning, and I hope to take him for a walk up Saddleback, which, after all, is the finest to my mind of all the Cumberland hills—though that is not saying much, for they are much lower in effect, in proportion to their real height, than I had expected. The beauty of the country is in its quiet roadside bits, and rusticity of cottage life and shepherd labour—its mountains are sorrowfully melted away from my old dreams of them."
>
> "Keswick, *July* 31.—The weather is really very endurable now, and to be commended, for Cumberland; it was shady and clear yesterday, without rain, and I did what I had long had it in my mind to do, went straight up the steep front of Saddleback by the central ridge to the summit. It is the finest thing I've yet seen, there being several bits of real crag-work, and a fine view at the top over the great plains of Penrith on one side, and the Cumberland hills as a chain on the other. Fine fresh wind blowing and plenty of crows. Do you remember poor papa's favourite story about the Quaker whom the crows ate on Saddleback? There were some of the biggest and hoarsest voiced ones about the cliff that I've ever had sympathetic croaks from, and one on the top, or near it, so big, that Downs and Crawley, having Austrian tendencies in politics[3] took it for a 'black eagle.' Downs went up capitally, though I couldn't get him down again, because he *would* stop to gather ferns. However, we did it all, and came down to Threlkeld—of the Bridal of Triermain—
>
> "'The King his way pursued
> By lonely Threlkeld's waste and wood'—
>
> in good time for me to dress, and, for a wonder, go out to dinner

[1] See the *Letters to William Ward*, vol. i. pp. 73 *seq.*; privately issued in 1893, and reprinted in a later volume of this edition.

[2] The letters of July 30 and 31 are reprinted from Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 243.

[3] See Vol. XVIII. pp. 538–539.

with Acland's friends the Butlers—chiefly to meet a young Scotchman[1]—whom I will tell you about in Joanna's letter as this is enough for you to read to-day."

"KESWICK, *August* 6.—I wished old times could come back again, on Skiddaw top to-day. Nothing in the world is so entirely unchanged in aspect as these hilltops—and the five-and-thirty years are there 'as a mist that rolls away.'[2] But I am really thankful to find myself so strong of limb again in the course of only a month's practice. I went up in two hours, and was coming down in cheerful speed, in the condition which, if I were a horse, would be described as 'without a hair turned,' when I met a strong-looking man in a guide's charge panting for breath. He asked me 'if I had such a thing as a drop of brandy, for he had forgotten to bring any up.' I told him 'it was not the least cold at the top, and he could rest there as long as he liked—and he would be much better with no brandy.' He was superfluous enough to thank me for this not very expensive consolation. But Crawley says it turned cold at the top very soon after I left it, so I hope the poor man got his brandy from somebody else."

It must have been after one of these mountain rambles that Frederic Myers, then a young man of twenty-four, first saw Ruskin. "I met him first," says Myers, "in my own earliest home, beneath the spurs of Skiddaw—its long slopes 'bronzed with deepest radiance,' as the boy Wordsworth had seen them long since in even such an evening's glow. Since early morning Ruskin had lain and wandered in the folds and hollows of the hill; and he came back, grave as from a solemn service, from 'day-long gazing on the heather and the blue.'"[3] In a letter to his mother, Ruskin himself describes such a day of solemn service and gazing:—

"LANGDALE, 13*th August* 1867. *Evening.*

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—It is perfectly calm to-night, not painfully hot, and the full moon shining over the mountains, opposite my window, which are the scene of Wordsworth's *Excursion*. It

[1] Perhaps Mr. Cockburn Muir, referred to above, p. xxix.

[2] Tennyson: "In the Valley of Cauteretz":—

"All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two-and-thirty years ago.
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
The two-and-thirty years were a mist that rolls away."

[3] *Fragments of Prose and Poetry*, by Frederic W. H. Myers, 1904, p. 90. Myers' father was incumbent of St. John's, Keswick. Myers was often to meet Ruskin in later years at Broadlands, and his psychical researches had much of Ruskin's sympathy.

was terribly hot in the earlier day, and I did not leave the house till five o'clock, then I went out, and in the heart of Langdale Pikes found the loveliest rock-scenery (chased with silver waterfalls) that I ever set foot or heart upon. The Swiss torrent beds are always more or less savage and ruinous, with a terrible sense of overflowing strength and danger lulled. But here, the sweet heather and ferns and stone mosses nestled in close to the cool dashing of the narrow streams; while every cranny of crag held its own little placid lake of amber, trembling with falling drops, but quietly trembling, not troubled into ridgy wave or foam, the rocks themselves —ideal rock as hard as iron—no, not quite that, but *so* hard that, after breaking some of it, breaking solid white quartz seemed like smashing brittle sugar-loaf in comparison—and cloven into the most noble masses, not grotesque, but majestic and full of harmony with the larger mountain mass of which they formed a part. Fancy what a place! for a hot afternoon after five, with no wind and absolute solitude—no creature, except a lamb or two, to mix any ruder sound or voice with the plash of the innumerable streamlets. I stayed up there so long that it's bed-time now—after writing Joan's letter—and I won't sit up; that is one great reason for my being better—that I'm always early in bed. To-morrow I leave early for Keswick, but shall probably go up Helvellyn again on the way. I leave these letters behind me, for surety of arrival.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN."[1]

Another letter is of interest as recording a visit to Coniston, which was afterwards to be his home:—

"I was at Coniston to-day," he writes (August 10). "Our old Waterhead Inn, where I was so happy playing in the boats, *exists* no more. Its place is grown over with smooth park grass—the very site of it forgotten!—and, a quarter of a mile down the lake, a vast hotel built in the railroad station style, making up, I suppose, its fifty or eighty beds, with coffee-room, smoking-room, and every pestilent and devilish Yankeeism that money can buy, or speculation plan.

"The depression, whatever its cause, does not affect my strength. I walked up a long hill on the road to Coniston to-day (gathering wild raspberries); then from this new Inn two miles, to the foot of Coniston Old Man; up it, down again (necessarily!), and back to dinner—without so much as warming myself—not that there was much danger of doing that at the top, for a keen west wind was

[1] This letter and the one next following are reprinted from Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, pp. 245, 244.

blowing drifts of cloud by, at a great pace, and one was glad of the shelter of the pile of stones, the largest and *oldest* I ever saw on a mountain top. I suppose the whole mountain is named from it. It is of the shape of a bee-hive, strongly built, about fifteen feet high (so that I made Downs follow me up it before I would allow he had been at the top of the Old Man), and covered with lichen and short moss. Lancaster sands and the Irish sea were very beautiful, and so also the two lakes of Coniston and Windermere, lying in the vastest space of sweet cultivated country I ever looked over (a great part of the view from the Rigi being merely over black pine forest, even on the plains). Well, after dinner the evening was very beautiful, and I walked up the long hill on the road back from Coniston, and kept ahead of the carriage for two miles, and was sadly vexed when I had to get in; and now, I don't feel as if I had been walking at all, and shall probably lie awake for an hour or two—and feeling as if I had not had exercise enough to send me to sleep."

On returning home Ruskin went for some time to Norwood, with his mother and cousin Joan, to take, under Dr. Powell, what would now be called a rest-cure. The rest included, however, a good deal of quiet work at botany and many concerts at the Crystal Palace; and Ruskin's diary contains indications of physical discomfort and nervous depression. A letter to Acland shows that he was in ill humour with the world. Acland, who was one of the Curators of the Oxford University Galleries,[1] seems to have contemplated resigning the office, with a view to getting Ruskin appointed in his place; this arrangement would have brought Ruskin occasionally to the University, and perhaps have led him to give lectures there upon the art collections. Ruskin's reply was this:—

"*23rd September* 1867.

"My dear Acland,—Not in despair nor in sick sloth, but in a deep, though stern hope, and in reserve of what strength is in me, I refuse to talk about art. The English nation is fast, and with furious acceleration, becoming a mob to whom it will be impossible to talk about *any*thing. Read the last seven verses of yesterday's first Lesson.[2] They are literally, and in every syllable, true of England, and the weapons with which such evil may be stayed before 'the end thereof' are not camel's-hair pencils. Camel's-hair raiment might do something.

[1] See below, p. 225.

[2] Jeremiah v. (lesson for the 14th Sunday after Trinity): "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. . . . They are waxen fat, they shine. . . . The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

"You have 'no idea of folded hands, while there is hope of safety.' Nor I; but if the *Tyne* had gone off into deep water with a leak gaining on her,[1] you would not have called the carpenters to paint her sides. Nevertheless, we will keep our cabins tidy to the last (though, by the way, if you and Richmond had not had your heads full of Raphael chalk scratches and Roman plaster patches, and had worked with wider sight, you might have had the Peter Martyr in the National gallery here instead of in Hades),[2] and, if you are tired of that curatorship and think that I can be of any use, I will do the best I can. But in no phrase of politeness I tell you that you are fitter for the place than I, and working with your old friend the Dean, and entering into the fruit of your efforts for many years, you had much better stay as you are, if you are not weary.

"Ever affectionately yours,
"J. RUSKIN."[3]

Acland seemed to think that this conditional acceptance was sufficient; but another friend of Ruskin, of less enthusiastic temperament, was more cautious. "Are you positively certain," wrote Dean Liddell, "that Ruskin would like to be Curator of the Galleries? Have you it in writing? And can his inclination or wish in August be depended upon in November?"[4] Liddell's cold water stopped the scheme, and Ruskin's call to Oxford was to come two years later in a different way.

Ruskin spent the winter of 1867–1868 quietly at home. He made acquaintance with Miss Jean Ingelow, whose poems he sometimes quotes at this period.[5] He went sometimes to see Coventry Patmore, "which," as he notes in his diary (January 3), "comforted and relieved me." Sir Herbert Edwardes (whose papers Ruskin was afterwards to edit[6]), Mr. Arthur Severn (who was to become so closely connected with Ruskin), and Mr. Brabazon, the artist, are among the friends whose visits are particularly recorded in the diary. Many others came to see him at Denmark Hill; but this was not always unalloyed pleasure. "Mama

[1] For Acland's coolness when wrecked in the *Tyne* (a West India Mail Company's steamer) in 1858, see *Præterita*, i. § 232.

[2] For the destruction of Titian's "Peter Martyr" by fire in 1866, see Vol. III. p. 28 *n.*

[3] This letter is reprinted from p. 369 of J. B. Atlay's *Memoir of Sir Henry Wentworth Acland*, 1903.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 369.

[5] See *Sesame and Lilies*, § 139 *n.*, and *Ethics of the Dust*, § 3 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 185 *n.*, 211).

[6] *A Knight's Faith* (in Ruskin's *Bibliotheca Pastorum*), 1885.

provoking in abuse of people," is a significant entry in the diary. His mother was affectionate, but also exacting and somewhat censorious; she was firmly persuaded that only the pernicious influence of ill-chosen friends had seduced her son from the evangelical principles which she had inculcated in his youth. She liked, too, to be mistress in her own house; and in that capacity she was a great martinet. But if her dependants feared, they also respected her, and never was an old servant turned away from her household. A charming story is told of a young friend who asked the mistress of the house what were the duties of one of several ancient maids. "She, my dear," answered the old lady, "puts out the dessert."[1] Now that advancing years had confirmed her in habits of great regularity and precision, she did not always welcome the sight of new faces and unexpected guests. We have seen, in the recollections of a visitor at an earlier date,[2] with what beautiful deference Ruskin treated his mother, and this was always his attitude, though sometimes he would venture indirectly to answer her reproaches. "At dinner," says Lady Burne-Jones, "if anything her son said, though not addressed to herself, did not reach her ear, she demanded to have it repeated, and from her end of the table came a clear thread of voice, 'John—John Ruskin—what was that you said?' When the sharply questioning sound at last penetrated to him, he never failed with the utmost respect to repeat his words for her." He met her demands upon his patience, says the same delicate observer, "with indescribable gentleness." The instinct for contradiction was strong in her, and her son's impulsive and enthusiastic talk often called it into exercise. "I remember an evening spent with her and her son," says Lady Burne-Jones, "when Edward read aloud, from Lane's *Arabian Nights*, the Story of the Barber, in which there is scarce a paragraph without some mention of God, the High, the Great, and at its conclusion Ruskin expressed great admiration for it. 'God forgive you, my child,' said a pitying voice from the fireside; and as we waited in silent astonishment for some explanation, she continued, 'for taking His name in vain.' Her son listened with perfect patience and dignity, and then, almost as if thinking aloud, answered with a solemn and simple refutation of the charge and a noble definition of what taking the name of God in vain really was. Would that I could remember his words! His mother seemed quite unmoved."[3] She was given to combating his opinions strongly and

[1] W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 282.
[2] Vol. V. p. xlviii.
[3] *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. i. pp. 252, 300.

publicly; the remark, "John, you are talking great nonsense," was often heard; and she would never admit any doubt of her own infallibility. But though she reserved to herself full liberty to criticise and contradict her son, yet no one was more sensitive than she to any criticism of him by others: like many another mother, she liked, and expected, to see her bairn respected. She loved him, as Mr. Collingwood well says, "with all the intensity of a fierce lioness nature."[1] And this was one reason why she resented anything which she considered as an attempt to impose upon his credulity or generosity. If her circle of interests was narrow, and her outlook on the problems of life and destiny confined within fixed and strict ideas, her reading of character was often as penetrating in substance as it was sharp in expression. Howell had on one occasion been regaling them with some of those wonderful tales, which are characterised in a "Limerick" by D. G. Rossetti;[2] the old lady threw down her netting, and said, "How *can* you two sit there and listen to such a pack of lies?"[3] Ruskin's tact and readiness no doubt smoothed over the outburst, and no one ever visited Denmark Hill without being struck by his gentle submissiveness.[4] But such reminiscences as have here been brought together serve to explain the entry in his diary, given above, or this passage in a letter to Professor Norton: "I'm very weary and sad. Joan is gone away—and the evenings sitting beside my mother only makes me sadder still."[5] His cousin Joan was the good angel in many domestic difficulties,[6] and her presence at Denmark Hill during these years was an equal comfort to the mother and the son.

Gradually Ruskin recovered strength and spirits, and the year 1868 was to be one of varied activity and much happy work. Already at the end of 1867 he had prepared *Time and Tide* for publication, and then, as also in the early months of 1868, he wrote and illustrated a series of geological papers. It was a bright spring-tide, and Ruskin's mood responded to it. At the beginning of the year he had a dream of good omen: "Dreamed on night of 2nd–3rd [January] of seeing

[1] *Life of John Ruskin*, p. 283.
[2] See *Rossetti Papers*, edited by W. M. Rossetti, p. 495.
[3] W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 283 (1900 edition).
[4] See, for instance, Professor Norton's *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. i. p. 43.
[5] *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. ii. p. 26 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition).
[6] For instance, Ruskin's mother "objected strongly, in these later years, to the theatre; and when sometimes her son would wish to take a party into town to see the last new piece, her permission had to be asked, and was not readily granted, unless to Miss Agnew, who was the ambassadress in such affairs of diplomacy" (W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 283, 1900 edition).

Lake of Constance, in lovely light—under sweet crisping wind and mountains far away." And, in the life of waking hours, "Could do nothing but stare[1] at the blue sky, and flowers, and intense brightness" (February 29). The Turners on the walls flashed back the glory of the days: "Up a minute or two before five. Lovely clear sunrise. Greta and Tees[2] looking prettier than ever. Read geology at my breakfast, with my two loveliest flint chalcedonies shining in the sun." And hope shone brightly, too. On May 4 a letter came from Ireland, which Ruskin notes in his diary by the one word "Peace." His Preface to "Grimm" had been written at Easter time, and he now set himself with renewed zest to write the lecture which he was to deliver in Dublin, for the sake of her who had sent him the message of peace.[3] He went to Winnington for a few days (May 6–12) to finish the lecture, and then crossed to Dublin. The lecture—on "The Mystery of Life and its Arts"—was, as we have seen,[4] a great success. After spending a few days in Dublin, Ruskin revisited Winnington (May 26 to June 1), and then returned to Denmark Hill. He was busy during July and August with speeches at the Social Science Association on strikes, and letters on the management of railways;[5] but also with cataloguing his minerals, and with "drawing drapery at Ned's."[6]

He now determined to devote himself for a while to drawing; and he chose, as being not too far from home, one of his favourite haunts—the town of Abbeville.[7] He loved the French air and the French landscape, as we have seen; and he wished to re-study, and to draw with his now more accomplished skill, the flamboyant architecture which, as a boy, he had loved intensely.[8] His diary and his letters show that he enjoyed more peace of mind during these months at Abbeville than had been his for a long time past. The first letter to his mother sets the key:—

> "*August* 25.—The old place is little spoiled yet, and I hope to get some valuable notes. The weather is lovely, and my first sketch

[1] In recording a dream at a later date (November 2), Ruskin says, "Dreamed of being in Verona, or some place that was and wasn't Venice. Met an Englishman who said 'he had been staring at things.' I said I was glad to hear it—to stare was the right thing, to *look* only was no use."

[2] The drawing by Turner, afterwards given by Ruskin to his School at Oxford: Standard Series, No. 2.

[3] See Preface to the 1871 edition of *Sesame and Lilies* (Vol. XVIII. p. 47 *n.*).

[4] See Vol. XVIII. p. lviii.

[5] Vol. XVII. pp. 528–534.

[6] Burne-Jones.

[7] He left Folkestone on August 24; was at Abbeville from August 25 to October 5; at Paris, October 6–8; and again at Abbeville, October 9–21.

[8] See *Eagle's Nest*, § 92.

has begun well, and I've had a walk afterwards on chalk hills, covered with scabious and bluebells, and I've ate a cutlet for lunch, and half a fowl and a whole pigeon and some Neuchâtel cheese for dinner, and I feel quite myself again."

He was himself again in his keen enjoyment of nature and in his unflagging interests. In the diary the entries alternate between memoranda of skies and clouds and flowers, and notes upon architectural features:—

"The line of poplars round the cemetery of the village of St. Riquier as tall as a mountain precipice, as graceful as girls."

"(*August* 30.)—Got to chalk down with branching road through dingle, exquisite, like a scene in Italy. Road wound upwards through small plantation; scabious and bluebell everywhere, and look of woods of Jura. Came out on top of down with heavenly view of the poplar groves and vale of Abbeville as far as the embouchure of the Somme.

"Beside the larkspur, in the stubble fields there grows luxuriantly a labiate plant, purple, with a little yellowish white double spot on its broadly expanded lower lip, otherwise much like euphrasy; but in such quantities that it purples the fields when one looks low along the surfaces, like the fringed soldanella of the Alps; and as that with primrose, so this is mixed with the pale yellow toadflax, giving just the same opposition of colours."

"*August* 27.—Bright morning with light breeze. I drove to St. Riquier. The town wholly desolate; the church scraped down and spoiled; the fringes which Nash represents[1] in the Lady Chapel round the windows taken away—probably falling, and too expensive to restore. St. Riquier built in 1500 precisely, marking civilization of France at end of the fifteenth century. The carving is elaborately stupid and vulgar, the last phase of flamboyant—monstrously, and to sickness, rich without design. The statues distorted and hideous."

"*August* 29.—To Rue. This chapel is the richest piece of flamboyant I have seen, and well worth study as a delicate example of the corrupt style. Its vaulted roof with pendants all chased like lace (a very fine vault, with ribs edged by knotted cable, is at St. Riquier). Its little niches with pedestals carried on long ends, emergent just under pedestal of very great grace and merit. An upper chapel is nearly as rich.

"Note that the sculpture of grotesque faces, throughout flamboyant period, is always ugly, never humorous in any true way. I am

[1] See Plate 15 in *Architecture of the Middle Ages drawn from Nature and on Stone*, by Joseph Nash: 1838.

especially shocked by the wooden brackets of the richer street houses, and by the deadly and ghastly purpose of nearly all. At Rue, the pedestal of the highest niche above entrance is formed by three skulls."[1]

"*September* 29.—Looking at black signs in square to-day, and showing Ward how much less dark they were than the open windows (*conf.* passage about this in *Elements of Drawing*[2]), I thought of Turner's late license in oil Venices of putting hollows of white campaniles in with black, even in distance. Turner took two great licenses in his later years, in black and vermilion; this, and vermilion for sun-shadow and for flesh in sunshine. Both these—or rather these three—licenses (for the third is founded on a third fact) led finally to abuse, though all three were founded on fact, and all had begun with his earliest work: in my Battle Abbey, black windows in Llanwrst no less than n Nottingham red flesh. Now, therefore, note of Turner's, as opposed to other people's licenses, how they were founded on fact; but also how their indulgence leads to evil. The black led to black and white sea pictures, with black steamers; at last to Burial of Wilkie.[3] The red shadow, to habitual vermilion outline, and general abuse of vermilion in fish, etc. The red flesh, to foreground figures and all that came of them."

"*September* 12.—Yesterday in morning at turn of river by the shipping quay,—which reminds me in the strangest way of the rapture of the last stage by the Brenta before coming in sight of Venice—the sunshine was full of white showering specks and gleams, which were a shoal of swallows who all dipped together and rose together, making the water quiver as with a shower of stones, and not merely touching it, but going fairly in, and rising heavily after a moment's bath. I was always afraid they would be caught, and not be able to get out of the water again."

"*September* 22.—Sunset on ramparts as opposite [sketch], first; then, ruby below; and at last thunderous and wild with delicate bars of flecked cloud mixed. I never saw anything more noble."

"*September* 29.—Up hill on Montreuil road—crashing shower, succeeded by divine gleam of sun on chalk banks and hedges, lurid green and tawny; then rosy and dim on cathedral and town, the cemetery spire coming out in gold, and its top fretted dark against purple grey—a perfect picture, with cathedral also dark. Finally, rainbow flushed in thunder-cloud in east."

[1] For another reference to the chapel at Rue, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 92.

[2] See Vol. XV. p. 54 *seq.*

[3] No. 528 in the National Gallery: see *Notes on the Turner Gallery* (Vol. XIII. p. 159), where Ruskin says that the picture is "spoiled by Turner's endeavour to give funereal and unnatural blackness to the sails."

Letters to his mother contain much pleasant gossip, record the pleasure which he found in sketching, and describe how he spent his days:—

"*September* 1.—I am getting into a good line of useful and peaceful work; for I feel convinced that the sketches I make now will please people, and be important records of things now soon to pass away."

"*September* 9.—I think I shall be able to write a little Stones of Abbeville when I have done, as I shall know every remnant of interest in the town."

"*Sunday evening, 7th September.*—It is as hot, I think, as it was the greatest part of the summer; I have both my windows wide open, letting in more noise than I like, at nine in the evening.

"I think you may like to know how my days are spent just now. I rise at six, get everything in order for the day, cast up accounts of previous one, to the last sou, and then go out for a stroll on the ramparts, where the effects of morning mists are lovely among the tall trees and huge red walls. I come in to breakfast—French roll and tea at eight—and read Italian history, Sismondi, till nine. Then I go out to draw, for two hours and a half, or a little over, always stopping before twelve. From twelve to one another stroll, about the streets, and so in to lunch—a chop or steak or bit of cold game. After that I write my letters and rest—generally falling asleep for a minute or two (though not so happily as beside you) till three. At three I go out again for my second drawing from three to five. At five I stop for the day, and start on my main walk from five to seven. At seven I come in to dinner (no pastry or dessert), and I have tea immediately afterwards, and so rest till half-past nine, and then to bed."

"*September* 18.—Many thanks for the little interrupted note; but you seem to have a most uncomfortable time of it, with the disturbance of the house. However, I can only leave you to manage these things as you think best, or feel pleasantest to yourself.

"I am saddened by another kind of disorder—France is in everything so fallen back, so desolate and comfortless compared to what it was twenty years ago—the people so much rougher, clumsier, more uncivilized—everything they do, vulgar and base. Remnants of the old nature come out when they begin to know you. I am drawing at a nice tallow-chandler's door, and to-day, for the first time, had to go inside for rain. He was very courteous and nice, and warned me against running against the candle-ends, or bottoms, as they were piled on the shelves, saying, 'You must take care, you see, not to steal any of my candles—or steal *from* my candles,' meaning not to rub them off on my coat. He has a beautiful

family of cats—papa and mama and two superb kittens—half Angora.

"Work going on well."[1]

The talks with the tallow-chandler who figures in this and the following letter are recorded in *Fors Clavigera*, where Ruskin describes how he engaged his friend on the ethics of candles, ecclesiastical and domestic.[2]

"(*September* 22.)—I am just going to my cats and tallow-chandler. . . . I am very much struck by the superiority of manner, both in him and in his two daughters, who serve at the counter, to persons of the same class in England. When the girls have weighed out their candles, or written down the orders that are sent in, they instantly sit down to their needlework behind the counter, and are always busy, yet always quiet; and their father, though of course there may be vulgar idioms in his language which I do not recognize, has entirely the manners of a gentleman."

"(*September* 30.)—I have one advantage here I had not counted on. I see by the papers that the weather in England is very stormy and bad. Now, though it is showery here, and breezy, it has always allowed me at some time of the day to draw—the air is tender and soft, invariably, even when blowing with force; and to-day I have seen quite the loveliest sunset I ever yet saw—one at Boulogne, in '61, was richer,[3] but for delicacy and loveliness, nothing of past sight ever came near this."

"*September* 30.—I am well satisfied with the work I am doing, and even with my own power of doing it, if only I can keep myself from avariciously trying to do too much, and working hurriedly. But I can do *very* little quite *well* each day; with that little, however, it is my bounden duty to be content.

"And now I have a little piece of news for you. Our old Herne Hill house being now tenantless and requiring some repairs before I can get a tenant, I have resolved to keep it myself for my rougher mineral work and mass of collections, keeping only my finest specimens at Denmark Hill. My first reason for this is affection for the old house; my second, want of room; my third,

[1] The letter of September 18 (in part) and the passages from the letters of September 18, 22, and 30, and October 19 have appeared in W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, pp. 251–254 (1900 edition).

[2] Letter 6. And, in this volume, see the conclusion of the Abbeville lecture (p. 267).

[3] In a letter to his father from Boulogne, August 4, 1861, Ruskin wrote: "The sunset on Friday evening here was without exception the most beautiful, and by far the most beautiful, I have ever seen in my life. It consisted of bars of ruby-coloured cloud, waved like sand, with a *fineness* of wave I never saw approached."

the incompatibility of hammering, washing, and experimenting on stones with cleanliness in my stores of drawings; and my fourth is the power I shall have, when I want to do anything very quietly, of going up the hill and thinking it out in the old garden, where your greenhouse still stands, and the aviary, without fear of interruption from callers.

"It may perhaps amuse you, in hours which otherwise would be listless, to think over what may be done with the old house. I have ordered it at once to be put in proper repair by Mr. Snell, but for the furnishing I can give no directions at present; it is to be very simple, at all events, and calculated chiefly for museum work and for store of stones and books, and you really must not set your heart on having it furnished like Buckingham Palace.

"I have bought to-day, for five pounds, the front of the porch of the Church of St. James. It was going to be entirely destroyed. It is worn away, and has little of its old beauty, but as a remnant of the Gothic of Abbeville—as I happen to be here, and as the church was dedicate to my father's patron saint (as distinct from mine)—I'm glad to have got it. It is a low arch, with tracery and niches, which ivy and the Erba della Madonna will grow over beautifully, wherever I rebuild it."

"(*October* 19.)—I am glad to come home, though much mortified at having failed in half my plans, and done nothing compared to what I expected. But it is better than if I were displeased with all I *had* done. It isn't Turner; and it isn't Correggio; it isn't even Prout; but it isn't bad."

Of the drawings which Ruskin thus made at Abbeville some account is given below, in the description of the illustrations to the present volume (p. lxxv.). He had occasional distractions, in the visits of assistants and friends. Mr. William Ward joined him for a while. He had Downs, too, for a week, to show him the country and how the French market-gardeners raised their melons. Professor Norton also visited him. "He spent most of the day in drawing, studying the church from various points, and portraying the elaborate and fanciful details of its architecture with the mastery of genius." Norton carried him off for a day or two to Paris, where they fell in with Longfellow, whose poetry Ruskin often much admired, and the poet's brother-in-law, Tom Appleton. "There could not be a pleasanter dinner," adds Professor Norton, "than that which we had one evening at Meurice's. Ruskin, Longfellow, and Appleton were each at his respectively unsurpassed best, and when late at night the little company broke up, its members parted from each other as if all had been old

friends."[1] Ruskin was, indeed, in a good mood during most of these months in France. "I went to my work," he notes in his diary (September 18), "for the first time this many and many a day singing a little to myself."

His main work was drawing; his intellectual interests were still much scattered. He was reading a good deal in the classics, and at one page of the diary he notes a morning spent on "planning concentration of work on antiquities." But in the afternoon he came down from Athena in the Air, and worked at "paper on employment"—that is, the pamphlet of *Notes on the General Principles of Employment for the Destitute and Criminal Classes*, which he issued for private circulation later in the year.[2]

This was the subject which absorbed much of Ruskin's time after his return from Abbeville at the end of October. A committee had been formed of persons interested in the subject of the Unemployed; Ruskin was on the general committee, and also on the executive sub-committee. He had a point of view of his own—sufficiently indicated in his *Notes*—and fought hard for such recognition of it as was possible. He found a valuable coadjutor in Cardinal (then Archbishop) Manning, and records some of his successes in the diary. "Hard fight on Committee; dine at Froude's" (December 4); "Did grand piece of work on Committee" (December 1). In letters to Mrs. Norton,[3] he gives a lively account of his difficulties and his devices. "Everybody sends me their opinions privately; I pick out what I want and prepare it as Mr. So-and-so's, patting it hard on the back." He saw the truth of Jowett's saying, that the way to get things done is not to mind who gets the credit of doing them.

Professor Norton, who with his wife and family was at this time staying at Keston in Kent, has described how "Ruskin did everything to make our stay in the country pleasant, coming over to see us, often writing and sending books or water-colour drawings by Turner, himself, and others, to light up the somewhat dull rooms of the little old Rectory in which we were living; sending also gifts to my little children. . . . To give pleasure was his delight."[4] Keston is close to Downe, and on one occasion Professor Norton arranged a meeting between Ruskin and Darwin. "Ruskin's gracious courtesy," he says, "was matched by Darwin's charming and genial simplicity.

[1] *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. i. pp. 178, 179.
[2] See Vol. XVII. pp. 540–546.
[3] Reprinted in a later volume of this edition from *Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. i. pp. 187–193.
[4] *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. i. pp. 176, 196.

Ruskin was full of questions which interested the elder naturalist by the keenness of observation and the variety of scientific attainment which they indicated, and their animated talk afforded striking illustration of the many sympathies that underlay the divergence of their points of view and of their methods of thought. The next morning Darwin rode over on horseback to say a pleasant word about Ruskin, and two days afterward Ruskin wrote, 'Mr. Darwin was delightful.'"[1] At a later date Darwin came over to see Ruskin at Denmark Hill, and Ruskin visited him at Downe. Darwin's biographer gives an amusing account of his father's courteous but feigned appreciation of the treasures of Denmark Hill:—

"This way of looking at himself as an ignoramus in all matters of art was strengthened by the absence of pretence, which was part of his character. With regard to questions of taste, as well as to more serious things, he always had the courage of his opinions. I remember, however, an instance that sounds like a contradiction to this: when he was looking at the Turners in Mr. Ruskin's bedroom, he did not confess, as he did afterwards, that he could make out absolutely nothing of what Mr. Ruskin saw in them. But this little pretence was not for his own sake, but for the sake of courtesy to his host. He was pleased and amused when subsequently Mr. Ruskin brought him some photographs of pictures (I think Vandyke portraits), and courteously seemed to value my father's opinion about them.[2]

There is a reference in this volume to Darwin's "unwearied and unerring investigations";[3] and it could be wished that Ruskin had always observed the same amenity of tone in his published criticisms of the great naturalist.

The other preoccupation which Ruskin notes as holding him during the weeks following his return from Abbeville is characteristic: "This last fortnight entirely taken up with Committees, and considering what to do in the winter among my old stores." He turned now to "history of the 16th century" and then to "mosses."[4] Botany seemed for a time to be winning in the race for Ruskin's immediate attention, but in the end he set himself down to Greek mythology, and wrote a lecture on "Greek Myths of Storm"; though, to be sure,

[1] *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. i. p. 195.
[2] *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, edited by his son, Francis Darwin, vol. i. pp. 125–126.
[3] *Queen of the Air*, § 62 *n.* (p. 358).
[4] See the account of a conversation with Miss Roberts given in Vol. XVIII. p. l. It may be noted also that the first chapter of *Proserpina* is dated November 3, 1868.

when he printed the lecture in a book—*The Queen of the Air*—a good deal of botany managed to find a place.[1] First, however, he had another task on hand—the preparation of his lecture for the Royal Institution on Flamboyant Architecture. "Much teased," he writes in the diary (January 12), "with too much to get into Abbeville lecture." This was a form of teasing to which Ruskin always found himself subjected; his mind was so full, his thought so active and wide-ranging that he ever saw the universal in the particular, and, at each turn of the road, found his subject branching off into innumerable directions. In the end, however, the Abbeville lecture got itself into consistent shape and manageable compass; though, indeed, he afterwards detached some thoughts on the relations of art and morality as more appropriate elsewhere than "in incidental connection with the porches of Abbeville,"[2] and though, too, his material overflowed into an illustrative catalogue.

The Abbeville lecture was delivered on January 29, 1869. The next three months were devoted to *The Queen of the Air*, the lectures on which the book is founded having been delivered on March 9 and 15. When he set himself to gather up his materials into a book, the work, as usual, grew under his hands;[3] he was beginning to feel the stress of close application; and having finished the last page, he left home for rest and change in Switzerland and Italy, entrusting to his friend Professor Norton, who was then in England, the task of seeing the book finally through the press. He wrote the Preface at Vevay. Some notes upon the volume, which was published in June, are given at a later place in this Introduction (p. lxv.). Before he left England he also prepared the catalogue for fifty of his less treasured drawings and pictures, mostly by Turner, which were sold at Christie's (Vol. XIII. pp. 569–572).

Ruskin was away on this occasion for four months, spending most of the time at Verona,[4] but sometimes going over to Venice for a few

[1] §§ 74–87: see below, pp. 367–377.

[2] See *Queen of the Air*, § 101 (below, p. 389).

[3] See in *Letters to Norton*, vol. i. p. 200, the letter of April 12, 1869 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition).

[4] His itinerary was as follows: Paris (April 27), Dijon (April 29), Neuchâtel (April 30), Vevay (May 1), Martigny (May 3), Domo d'Ossola (May 5), Baveno (May 6), Verona (May 9), Venice (May 11), Verona (May 14), Venice (July 1), Verona (July 2), Venice (July 16), Verona (July 18), Padua (July 19), Verona (July 21), Venice (July 29), Verona (August 10), Brescia (August 11), Milan (August 12), Como and Lugano (August 14), Faido and Hospenthal (August 15), Bekenried (August 16), Giessbach (August 18), Thun (August 24), Giessbach (August 25), Neuchâtel (August 28).

days. As in the previous year he had gone to Abbeville to revise his impressions of the French architecture which he had studied for *The Seven Lamps*, so now he revisited another of his favourite haunts—Verona, the town which, he says, "represented the faith and the beauty of Italy,"[1] and there, and at Venice, he reconsidered the conclusions he had formed in *The Stones of Venice*. In the main he found nothing to retract. "I am *very* glad to find," he wrote to his mother from Venice (August 7), "that after seventeen years I can certify the truth of every word of *The Stones of Venice* as far as regards art." One new discovery, however, he made among the Venetian pictures. "This Carpaccio," he wrote to Burne-Jones (May 18), "is a new world to me."[2] In the sphere of architecture and history he found that his main conclusions had been right, but the studies of the intervening years now suggested many qualifications, connexions, and reserves which occurred to him:—

> "The work still goes on well," he writes from Verona (June 16), "except in one respect, that the questions I have to consider respecting architectural styles have become difficult and interminable to me in proportion to my knowledge. I am like a physician who has begun practice as an apothecary's boy, and gone on serenely and not unsuccessfully treating his patients under rough notions, generally applicable enough—as, that cold is caught sitting in a draught, and stomach-ache by eating too many plums, and the like—but who has read, at last, and thought, so much about the mucous membrane and the liver, that he dares not give anybody a dose of salts without a day's reflection on the circumstances of the case. However, there *is* great and true difficulty in tracing the sources of the power of different schools of art, and I don't get on with my *thinking* work at all just now."

But the more he sketched and studied, the more he saw his way; and as in France he had planned a *Stones of Abbeville*, so now he seems to have intended a *Stones of Verona*.[3] "I think my work on Verona," he writes to his mother (June 21), "though much shorter, will be a far better one than on Venice." Ultimately the work took no more elaborate form than the lecture on Verona which comes last in the present volume. It is packed full of subjects which are glanced

[1] *Præterita*, ii. § 140.
[2] The letter, with other references to Ruskin's "discovery" of Carpaccio, is printed in Vol. IV. p. 356 *n*. See also *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 20.
[3] He uses the phrase in § 10 of the lecture (below, p. 434).

at rather than fully discussed, and it was illustrated by an exhibition of drawings, several of which are here reproduced. In letters to his mother we may trace the impressions and the thoughts which crowded Ruskin's mind during these months of study at Verona, and which coloured his lecture:—

"Domo d'Ossola, *May* 5.—I never yet had so beautiful a day for the Simplon as this has been, though the skin of my face is burning now all over—to keep me well in mind of its sunshine. I left Brieg at six exactly—light clouds breaking away into perfect calm of blue. Heavy snow on the Col—about a league, with the wreaths in many places higher than the carriage. Then, white crocus all over the fields, with Soldanella and Primula farinosa. I walked about three miles up, and seven down, with great contentment—the waterfalls being all in rainbows, and one beyond anything I ever yet saw, for it fell in a pillar of spray against shadow behind, and became rainbow altogether. I was just near enough to get the belt broad, and the down part of the arch; and the whole fall became orange and violet against deep shade. To-morrow I hope to get news of you all, at Baveno.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. Ruskin." [1]

"Baveno, *May* 6.—It is wet this morning and very dismal, for we are in a ghastly new Inn, the old one being shut up, and there is always a reaction after a strong excitement like the beauty of the Simplon yesterday, which leaves one very dull. But it is of no use growling or mewing. I hope to be at Milan to-morrow—at Verona for Sunday. I have been reading Dean Swift's Life and *Gulliver's Travels* again. Putting the delight in dirt, which is a mere disease, aside, Swift is very like me, in most things—in opinions exactly the same." [2]

"Verona, *May* 10.—My father's birthday generally brings me some good. . . . To-day . . . soft air and light, among the tombs of noble people, and rest, with those who can love, and be betrayed, no more."

"Venice, *May* 11.—I am much surprised to find how great pleasure I can take in this place still. It is much less injured than

[1] This letter is given in W. G. Collingwood's *Life of John Ruskin*, p. 259 (1900 edition).

[2] Also in Collingwood, p. 259. For the last sentence, see Vol. XVIII. p. lxi.

I expected, and it seems as if the seventeen years had passed like a dream, and left me here again, my old self, only wiser and capable of better judgment and work, though with failing strength."

"VERONA, *May* 16.—I am now completely in my element—or rather, in my *two* elements—for every piece of sculpture here is as interesting in mineralogy as in art. I never saw such wonderful marbles in my life, and they are all from the mountains close by; also, now that I know more and feel more about Italian history, every corner of the churches becomes interesting to me, and I hope to put some things together in a way that will interest others."

"VERONA, *May* 21.—I had a sunset last night which convinced me that, after all, there is nothing so picture-like as the colour of Italian landscape. There were some blue mountains beyond the Lago di Garda seen against the light, and they were of a blue exactly like the blue of paint, or of the bloom of a plum, a lovely plain, covered with vines and cypresses, being all round, to the south and west, and soft lower slopes of Alp on the north. I never saw anything more heavenly."

"*May* 25.—It is very strange that I have just been in time—after seventeen years' delay—to get the remainder of what I wanted from the red tomb of which my old drawing hangs in the passage. To-morrow they put up scaffolding to retouch, and, I doubt not, spoil it for evermore. But I have always my great plan of fighting the Rhone to fall back upon."[1]

"*May* 26.—I am getting on quite beautifully with my drawing. . . . But hitherto I have had to draw against time. I got a delay of ten days in putting up a scaffolding, and I have had to do all I could in the time; it has hurried and confused me much."

Notes on the drawings of the Castelbarco Tomb here referred to will be found in Ruskin's "Verona" Catalogue (below, pp. 451–453). When the work of restoration, or destruction, was accomplished, he bought "one of the stones of the roof of my dear old red tomb"; it has "part of its new white cap on," he writes (July 23), "and looks like a Venetian gentleman in a Pantaloon's mask." Two days later he "got at the stone-mason who long ago restored the broken pieces of the tomb of Can Signorio, and got from him one of the original little shafts of the niches. It is in a splendid, largely crystalline white marble (I think Greek, not Italian), and is a perfect example of the chiselling at Verona in the fourteenth century. It is only about a yard high, and I shall carry it home myself like a barometer, wrapt in paper."

[1] This extract is given in Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 263.

In preserving records of the falling Stones of Verona, Ruskin had the assistance of J. W. Bunney:[1]—

> "VERONA, *June* 3.—I am getting on well with all my own work, and much pleased with some that Mr. Bunney is doing for me, so that really I expect to carry off a great deal of Verona—especially if this cool weather lasts. . . . The only mischief of the place is its being too rich. Stones, flowers, mountains, all equally asking one to look at them—a history to every foot of ground, and a picture on every foot of wall, frescoes fading away in the neglected streets—like the colours of the dolphin.[2] And I *can* only do—so much—so little!—every day."
>
> "VERONA, *June* 7.—I enjoy my *mornings* here immensely. I get up at quarter to five and dress quietly, looking out at the morning light on the tomb of the Count Castelbarco (my favourite old red one); then at quarter to six I go to the café at the corner of the square and sip my cup of coffee, looking at the lovely old porch of St. Anastasia; then by six o'clock I am at my work, as I used to be in 1845, which it is great pleasure to me to find still possible. Then I come in to breakfast at half-past eight and read a little—then draw again till eleven, when I come in to write my letters—then I rest till three—then get a couple of hours more work—and then my walk before dinner. I dine at eight, just now—for else I should lose the sunset (but seven is better)—and get to bed at ten. But there's so much to do!"
>
> "VERONA, *June* 8.—This place would be *too* beautiful and delightful—if only it were utterly desolate. But the human creatures of it are horrible. They live in a perpetual anger with their neighbours, their cattle, and themselves, for they have all a discontented and downcast look, which means scorn of self, and they cannot speak but in loud fury if the question be but of a cabbage stalk. I was thinking of Frederick the Great's final scorn of mankind, to-day—the end of all his labour.[3] I believe if one tries energetically to do good, one will always see little but evil in men; and if one tries to do evil, one develops the good, so contradictory are the fates. However, mind, I don't give in to the "corruption of human

[1] For previous references to Bunney, see Vol. III. p. 210; Vol. V. p. xli.; Vol. X. pp. lxiii.–lxiv.; and Vol. XIV. p. xix. Several of the drawings which he made for Ruskin are in the Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford: see *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 83, in Vol. XX., where a note is now added upon the artist and his work.

[2] This extract (down to this point) is in Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 264.

[3] See Carlyle's *Friedrich*, book xxi. ch. ix.: "He well knew himself to be dying. From of old, Life has been infinitely contemptible to him. . . . That the unfathomable Demiurgus should concern himself with such a set of paltry ill-given animalcules as oneself and mankind are, this also, as we have often noticed, is in the main incredible to him."

nature,"[1] any more than, if I had to live in the Pontine marshes, I would allow a theory of the general corruption of water."

"VERONA, *June* 10.—If I remember rightly, you used to take some interest in Mr. Bunney. You may like to know he is doing most lovely work for me[2]—coloured drawings of the buildings, large—while I myself draw the detail, requiring (though I say it) my advanced judgment to render accurately. Alas! the judgment is still far before the manual power. I was quarter of an hour yesterday vainly trying to draw a fold of Can Grande's mantle.[3] But I do better than any one else would. For no one else would even try.

"I had a wonderful drive yesterday afternoon among the loveliest *soft* mountains I ever saw, undulating themselves like folds of the fairest purple drapery, with Verona on the other side in the plain, her many towers looking almost like a fleet of ships on far-off sea.

"There is such a lovely *wayside* flower here, literally a wayside rose; it is a white, or pale yellow, potentilla, looking just like a small white rose growing as a buttercup does."

"VERONA, *June* 15.—I framed last night, to keep it safe, a really very lovely pencil drawing of the tomb of Can Grande,[4] and this morning before breakfast got two arches of the most precious of the old bridges, and in fact am for once losing no time; all the drawings coming more or less well.

"The perpetual irritation caused by the misery and folly of the people (an *inbred* folly of many generations which, if one could even grind the whole race of them in the valley of Chamouni for a mortar, with Mont Blanc, upside down, for a pestle, one couldn't grind out of them in one grain or tittle) are perhaps very good for me in fixing the resolutions I have been making for resistance to the evil of the times.

"I have a lovely letter from Mrs. Cowper, so much interested in all my plans."

"VERONA, *June* 22.—I am 'getting quite round' my favourite Griffin. I am painting him on the other side from that I engraved in *Modern Painters*, and the marble of him comes all into beautiful orange and grey, and I'm continually finding out new feathers and sinews in him that I did not know of.[5]

"The before-breakfast hours are very delightful, just now. The fresh snow on the hills; sky cleared by rain, luxuriant vines, almost

[1] See *Queen of the Air*, § 71 (p. 365).

[2] See, for instance, No. 11 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue, and Nos. 8, 9, 10, 16 in the "Verona" Catalogue; below, pp. 271, 451, 453.

[3] See Plate A in Vol. XI. (p. 88).

[4] Perhaps one of the drawings from which Plate XXIII. here (p. 441) is reproduced.

[5] See No. 4 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 449).

at every house corner as well as covering the hills, and the towers and bridges of the city huge in morning mist.

"But the unhappy people with no hope, nor understanding, nor reverence, nor delight, and yet so capable of all—if they were cared for. It is living in a city of the dead—disquieted and troublous.

"The *old* dead are so much more really living, by their work. At St. Zeno this morning I was at work on two lines of fresco—one of fourteenth century—*modern*, which, where broken away, showed large spaces of twelfth-century fresco beneath it, and both first-rate of their kind."

"VERONA, *June* 25.—I've just come in from my morning walk—the worst of it is, there's too much everywhere, like having illuminated missals laid open before one in a long row. To-day at St. Fermo Maggiore I found out two or three beautiful things in one corner of the porch[1] in ten minutes, any one of which would take a day to draw, or to explain; then just as I was going away, I saw a shoot of new vine running up over the most perfect *ivy*, both of them holding to a lovely wall of red brick and white marble of the thirteenth century. Now, fancy that! the lovely colour of brick and marble six hundred years old, and over it perfect ivy and young vine in luxuriant shoots—it was enough to drive one wild, and this kind of thing is at every corner.

"Drawings go on very beautifully—but *so* slowly.

"I had the loveliest view last night of all yet. The weather is settling, and I had a calm sunset over the Lago di Garda, its purple mountains relieved against its silver shield—all seen from the sweetest bank of balmy thyme and grass—in a garden of vines. There is one good in the noise and evil of the town, it makes the peace of the fields so precious."

"VERONA, *June* 28.—It is curious how exactly this place unites all the things I have chiefly studied—so as to enable me to bring myself *all* out, in what I shall have to say of it.

"The rock on which its walls are built was the first in which fossil remains were ever studied; here, first, it was suggested that they were remains of real shells and not mere illusions of chance.[2] And, as I have said before, the flowers are supremely beautiful and wonderful also, and the mountain views unrivalled, and all this with four early churches of twelfth and thirteenth century—any one of which would be enough to occupy me for a year—besides the Scaliger tombs, and the street palaces.

"I hope to do a very interesting piece of work upon it, but I am but just in time."

[1] See Nos. 8–10 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 451).
[2] See below, "Verona and its Rivers," § 2 (p. 430 *n.*).

"VERONA, *June* 29.—I never did so much work in a given time as I have in this last month, and all of it is more or less good, and satisfactory. And at least (which is my principal reason for doing it) such as it is, no one but I could do it. I have been all this morning drawing a bit of the old Scala ironwork, with all its jags and breaks and bends; everybody else would take the pattern and do it all neat, and the beauty of ages—if any one cares for it—*can* only be got in my way."[1]

"VERONA, *June* 30.—I was looking over all my work last night, and it really is very good, and there's a great deal of it.

"The history is becoming immensely interesting to me as I read more of the old books about it. The great difficulty is not to overexcite myself or do too much, all the more difficult because my thoughts both of life and death are not cheerful, so that rest is always a sort of 'Now here are two hours which I have to spend only in walking towards the End—two hours lost, out of short life.'

"I do not know how much you cared to hear about my Alpine plans. I hope that I shall get times of more refreshing work and thought in them."

"VERONA, *July* 5.—I dined early yesterday and drove a good way towards the head of the Lago di Garda to see the rocks of marble on the road. They are full of interest, and make the most beautiful landscapes, with the cypresses and vines that belong to them. I ought to do some wonderful work, joining my geology and art and political economy all together in this essay on Verona. I was at work rather hard this morning at six o'clock drawing a seahorse on a palace gate, and now I'm so sleepy (twelve) that I can't write legibly; so I won't write any more, but will rest a little."

"VERONA, *July* 6.—I went yesterday for a little run up the valley which ascends to the Tyrol, and had a mountain walk which did me good. But I never felt more distinctly that I was more in my place at Verona than on the hills, and that while many people could draw mountains, no one could draw statues or frescoes as well as I could; that is to say, perceiving as exactly where their beauty lay."

"VENICE, *August* 3.—You will never believe it, but I have actually been all the morning trying to draw—a baby.[2] The baby which the priest is holding in the little copy of Tintoret by Edward Jones which my father liked so much, over the basin-stand in his bedroom.

[1] Ruskin's drawing of the ironwork may be seen in Plate B in Vol. XI. (p. 90). See also the piece of "iron-lace" engraved in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 2.

[2] This is a water-colour copy of the child in Tintoret's "Presentation in the Temple," or "Circumcision": the picture is in the Scuola di San Rocco (see Vol. XI. p. 409). Ruskin's study of the child is now No. 96 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). The copy by Burne-Jones is also now at Oxford (No. 225 in the Educational Series).

All the knowledge I have gained in these seventeen years[1] only makes me more full of awe and wonder at Tintoret. But it *is* so sad—so sad:—no one to care for him but me, and all going so fast to ruin.

"He has done that infant Christ in about five minutes, and I worked for two hours in vain, and could not tell *why* in vain—the *mystery* of his touch is so great."[2]

"VENICE, *August* 8 (*Sunday*).—I have done my work—at Venice—for this time; but it has been very serious work, bearing much on the question of the principal employment of what remains to *me* of life, and bringing before me, in the sternest way, the laws of life for others. For here in one city may be seen the effects of extreme aristocracy and extreme democracy—of the highest virtues and worst sins—of the greatest arts and the most rude simplicities of humanity. It is the history of all men, not 'in a nutshell,' but in a nautilus shell—my white nautilus[3] that I painted so carefully is a lovely type of Venice."

An inspection of the drawings in the Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford is necessary in order to give an idea of the large amount of work which Ruskin did with the pencil and the brush during his summer at Verona in 1869. He worked hard, and allowed himself few distractions. But he much enjoyed occasional days spent with his old and dearly loved friend, Rawdon Brown, at Venice. A chance meeting in Verona with Longfellow, whom Ruskin had seen in Paris the year before,[4] also gave him much pleasure, as also a subsequent meeting with Holman Hunt in Venice:—

"VERONA.[5]—As I was drawing in the square this morning in a lovely, quiet, Italian light, there came up the poet Longfellow with his little daughter, a girl of twelve or thirteen, with *springy*-curled flaxen hair—curls, or waves, that wouldn't come out in damp, I mean. They stayed talking beside me some time. I don't think it was a very vain thought that came over me, that if a photograph could have been taken of the beautiful square of Verona, in that soft light, with Longfellow and his daughter talking to me at my work, some people both in England and America would have liked copies of it."

[1] That is, since 1851–1852, when Ruskin was writing the last two volumes of *Stones of Venice*, containing, in the Venetian Index, the account of Tintoret's works in the Scuola di San Rocco.

[2] This letter is reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 266.

[3] A study by Ruskin of the Paper Nautilus is No. 196 in the Educational Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.).

[4] Above, p. xliii.

[5] The letter is dated May 4, a slip of the pen for June. It is in W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 264.

"VENICE, *July* 1.—The painter, Holman Hunt, is here, and yesterday I showed him the Scuola di San Rocco, and I thought again if there could have been got two photographs—one of the piazza at Verona, with Longfellow and me, and another of Tintoret's Annunciation, with Holman Hunt and me examining it—both of them would find some sale with the British public."

The reader will have noticed allusions in some foregoing letters to "Alpine plans," and many notes upon the contrast between the beauties of nature and of art and the misery of the human beings in the midst of them. This is a refrain, perpetually recurring, in all Ruskin's later books and letters. He dare not be happy, with so much pain around him; he cannot be miserable, with so much beauty to enjoy and to interpret:—

"VERONA, *June 17th*, 1869.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—The weather is quite cool and pleasant, and the after-dinner drives are entirely delightful. Yesterday I was up the hills far above the town, looking down on Verona on one side, and over the great plain as far as Padua on the other, with the Alps to the north; and the hill all over sweet wild grass at the top, with the skylarks singing, as if there were really no harm in the world at all.

"All these things do not make me happy—nothing will ever do that; and I should be ashamed if anything could, while the earth is so full of misery. But they are very good and comforting to me, and help me to do my work better.

"I am painting the Roman bridge over the Adige very successfully.[1]

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN."

The Alpine plans of which he speaks had often been in his mind before,[2] and he reverted to them as he passed through Switzerland in this year on his way to Verona, where, too, he found the same problem awaiting solution as in the valley of the Rhone:—

"BRIEG, *May* 4.—I have been forming some plans as I came up the valley from Martigny. I never saw it so miserable, and all might be cured if they would only make reservoirs for the snow waters and use them for agriculture, instead of letting them run down into the Rhone, and I think it is in my power to show this."

[1] This is the Ponte della Pietra. The drawing is No. 295 in the Educational Series at Oxford.

[2] See, for instance, *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 391, and *Munera Pulveris*, § 147 (Vol. XVII. p. 270).

At Verona he had heard from some of his peasant friends at Chamouni, and he still hoped to carry out experiments there in curbing the mountain torrents:—

"VERONA (*May* 22).—I know that the thing can be done, and all these great monstrous dragons of rivers harnessed, and made fruitful and serviceable in all their waves."

"VERONA, *June* 2.—I had yesterday your lovely letter of 29th May, as nicely written as could be, in spite of bad pens, and saying that you would have pleasure in the thought of my having that land at Chamouni, which it gives me great delight to know. I think it very likely I shall get it. I see more and more clearly every day my power of showing how the Alpine torrents may be—not subdued—but 'educated.'[1] A torrent is just like a human creature—left to gain full strength in wantonness and rage, no power can any more redeem it; but watch the channels of every early impulse and fence *them*, and your torrent becomes the gentlest and most blessing of servants."

"FAIDO, *August* 14.—This is the village just below Turner's great torrent scene, where I stayed—ages ago—to draw it. I could not get farther this evening, for the St. Gothard road was last year carried away for miles by the inundations, and one has now to work one's way through cart-loads of sand; but there is no more difficulty now between me and the top.

"Is it not strange that Turner should at once have fixed on *this* torrent, as his exponent and example of the fury of Alpine stream; and that eighteen years after his death I should find the most tremendous desolation I ever saw in the Alps, caused by this same stream.[2]

"No other, in the whole range of Alpine river, has yet given me the idea of its being unopposable; but I do *not* see how to deal with this Ticino.

"All its tributaries descend from beds of clear hard rock. Every drop comes down as clean as by a pipe from a house roof, and nearly as steep down, and you have forty miles of Alps on each side drained clean and clear into the Ticino in four hours after the storm begins!

"The plague of it, too, *this* time, is that every chief burst of it was over a village. Of the village of Giornico, once the prettiest in the valley, only half the houses are yet standing, in the midst of heaps of rocks, rolled stones, and sand.

[1] Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 19, *ad fin.*

[2] For another reference to the inundations of the Ticino in 1868, see "Verona and its Rivers," § 30; below, p. 446.

> "I shall enjoy the St. Gothard drawing,[1] however, when I get home, more than ever, which is very heartless and wicked; but I shall."

He had, too, in his mind those larger schemes of social reform to which reference has already been made in this Introduction. He speaks of one of them in a letter to his mother:—

> "VERONA, *June* 18.—Yesterday, it being quite cool, I went for a walk, and as I came down from a rather quiet hillside a mile or two out of town, I passed a house where the women were at work spinning the silk off the cocoons. There was a sort of whirring sound as in an English mill; but at intervals they sang a long sweet chant, all together, lasting about two minutes, then pausing a minute and then beginning again. It was good and tender music, and the multitude of voices prevented any sense of failure, so that it was all very lovely and sweet, and like the things that I mean to try to bring to pass."[2]

Ruskin's letters to Professor Norton of this date show how full his mind was of the question of inundations. He was bent on "redeeming that valley of the Rhone." He would try and interest the Alpine Club in the scheme,[3] and if they would not take it up, he would "do *one* hillside himself." On one of his flying visits from Verona to Venice he met an engineer who was interested in a scheme for constructing an aqueduct. He had conversations, too, with Signor Carlo Blumenthal, the Venetian banker, who was connected with the management of the lagoons. To both of them he preached his gospel of educating the streams. If men would only catch the waste water where it fell, and keep it till they wanted it, instead of letting it run down into the valleys, the arid Alps would be "one garden," and the inundations of the Ticino and the Adige need never recur. "Every field its pond, every ravine its reservoir" was his principle;[4] and he was determined to show, if only on one hillside, how the thing could be done. When he returned home he laid his various schemes before Carlyle, who received report of them with sympathy, if with some criticism:—

> "Ruskin," says Froude, "was becoming more and more interesting to him. Ruskin seemed to be catching the fiery cross from his hand, as his

[1] Turner's "Pass of Faido," so often engraved and discussed by Ruskin: see Vol. VI. pp. xxv., xxvi.

[2] Reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 265. The incident is referred to in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 32. For "the things I mean to try to bring to pass," see the account in a later volume of the Langdale Linen Industry.

[3] See also Vol. XVIII. p. lii.

[4] See *Letters to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. i. pp. 207–237, reprinted in a later volume of this edition.

own strength was failing. Writing this autumn [1869] to myself, he said, 'One day, by express desire on both sides, I had Ruskin for some hours, really interesting and entertaining. He is full of projects, of generous prospective activities, some of which I opined to him would prove chimerical. There is, in singular environment, a ray of real Heaven in R. Passages of that last book *Queen of the Air* went into my heart like arrows.'"[1]

"Don't neglect," Carlyle wrote to Ruskin himself (October 1), "to call on me the first time you are in town—the sight of your face will be a comfort, and I long for a little further talk on the problems you are occupied with. . . . *Come*, and let us settle some *weekly* evening again; why not?"

Ruskin's projects as expounded to Carlyle, and many other plans, were, however, to be interrupted by a call to fresh work which he received towards the close of his sojourn in Italy in 1869. He was never to carry out in practice, on any considerable scale, the schemes of aquatic engineering to which he had given so much thought. But he touched upon them in his lecture on "Verona," to which he added in the title "and its Rivers"; in his letters on Roman Inundations (Vol. XVII.); and often, incidentally, in *Fors Clavigera*. The news of his call to new duties at Oxford was sent home in two letters to his mother:—

"Lugano, *Saturday, 14th August* 1869.

"My dearest Mother,—Yesterday—exactly three months from the day on which I entered Verona to begin work—I made a concluding sketch of the old Broletto of Como, which I drew first for the *Seven Lamps*[2]—I know not how many years ago—and left Italy for this time, having been entirely well and strong every day of my quarter of a year's sojourn there.

"This morning, before breakfast, I was seeing for the first time Luini's Crucifixion,[3] for all religious art qualities the greatest picture south of the Alps—or rather in Europe.

"And just after breakfast I get a telegram from my cousin George[4] announcing that I am Professor of Art—the first—at the University of Oxford.

"Which will give me as much power as I can well use, and would have given pleasure to my poor father, and therefore to me—

[1] *Carlyle's Life in London*, vol. ii. p. 383 (8vo edition).
[2] A slip for *Stones of Venice:* see Vol. IX., Plate V. (p. 174).
[3] On the wall of the screen in the Church of Sta. Maria degli Angioli, "The Passion of Christ"—a picture containing several hundred figures, arranged in two rows.
[4] George Richardson.

once—and perhaps may yet give some pleasure to—some one who has given me my worst pain.[1]

"It will make no difference in my general plans about travel, etc. I shall think quietly of it as I drive up towards St. Gothard to-day.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Ever your loving Son,

"J. RUSKIN."[2]

"HOSPENTHAL, ST. GOTHARD, *15th August* 1869.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—Here, in the old Inn you know so well, under the grassy hill you used to be so happy climbing in the morning, I get a letter from my cousin George telling me I am the first professor of art appointed at the English Universities.

"I hope—quietly and patiently, to be of very wide use in this position. I am *but just* ripe for it. I should have committed myself—in some way—had I got it sooner. But now it will enable me to obtain attention, and attention is all that I want to enable me to say what is entirely useful instead of what is merely pretty or entertaining.

"But I shall be home soon now, and will tell you all about it—far too much to write.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN."

The creation of the Slade Professorship of Fine Art at Oxford, Ruskin's election to it, and the work to which he set himself, are dealt with in the Introduction to the next volume. He was already on his way home when he heard of the appointment. He would gladly have stayed longer in Italy, but his mother was yearning for his return. At Milan he stayed for a day in order to visit Count Giberto Borromeo, whom he had met at Venice and whom he greatly liked. Then, after crossing the St. Gothard, he spent a day at Thun with Professor Norton, and went to see "Marie of the Giessbach,"[3] who was dying of consumption.[4] But the beauty of the place charmed him as much as ever:—

"Marie," he writes to his mother (August 26), "has just brought me a nice little basket to gather some wild strawberries in, for my

[1] See, again, *Præterita*, iii. ch. iii.
[2] This letter is reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, pp. 266–267.
[3] See Vol. XVIII. p. xliii.
[4] *Letters to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. i. p. 225.

dessert. Poor Marie will never gather any more, unless they grow in heaven, which I very much hope they do if I am to live there. Cima da Conegliano always puts them in the grass near his Saints."[1]

"GIESSBACH, 21*st August* 1869.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I do not know when I have enjoyed myself so much as I do in my quiet walks here. After the noise, vice, and uncleanness of Italy, the pure moss and rocks, now in their perfect glow of summer beauty and repose, are intensely soothing to me; and I am so interested in everything by the last three years' work in botany and geology, and especially by my present plans for managing the rainfall. I have been resting in perfect quiet on a sofa of moss, with the great curtain of soft pines, 2000 feet high, drawn behind, between me and the sun (and the Giessbach glittering through it), examining intently for an hour together the rim of the ravines above Brientz, on the opposite side of the lake, and planning where the dykes were to be thrown across, and where the stream was to be led, out of each, and how the drainage of the rain in the fields above was to be stopped.

"I *have* a little too many irons in the fire, as you say, for in the midst of this engineering I was so quiet (thinking), that a large grey grasshopper came to look at me; and then walked on to my coat, and examined that with the greatest attention; and then on to my hand, and examined that, not, since that was impossible, with greater, but with more prolonged care; meantime I was also examining *him*, and his wonderful eyes, and little active legs at his mouth; and grand thighs, striped black, which are his musical instruments, and his little brown ruff falling over the back of his neck. He stayed so long that I got tired and put him down, whereupon he either sang a song or uttered a remonstrance, I don't know which, with both his legs, and jumped away with a whirr—*half* flying.

"I leave on Thursday, but come by Neuchâtel and Dijon as it is shorter. Here is a pretty envelope for you, for the Hôtel de la Cloche, and Acland's lovely letter, and I am, my dearest Mother, ever your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN."

"GIESSBACH, *Sunday, 22nd August* 1869.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I think I never had so exquisite a walk yet in Switzerland as I have had this morning to the country *above* the Giessbach. The path goes up in the shade all the way, through beech woods (very noble trees if there were nothing else to see),

[1] See *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 175).

and then into a perfect Paradise of soft knoll and banks of grass, which being all mown now, and yet kept fresh and living by the continual springs (and late rain), is in the very perfectness of grass existence for *walking* on; so smooth, united, mossy, and perfumed, that in the early morning sunshine it was all a green light below, as the sky was a blue light above; and the Giessbach stream comes out of a magnificent ravine beneath these meadows, in one white fall after another, far above those seen in the known fall, and to-day the insects were all so hungry for honey, after the wet days, it was a pleasure to see them feed—there were two great bees, one butterfly, and a little red-backed beastie, neither fly nor beetle, but between the two, all on one purple ball of scabious at once. I was surprised to watch the perfect serenity with which the little butterfly (not *quite* butterfly—more of a golden moth, with a blue light here and there) sucked his fill between the great brown bees, fidgeting about round the ball and pushing the fragile creature out of their way, not angrily, but just as if it had been a leaf of the flower (not that a scabious has leaves like that, but they treated it as if it were a pease-blossom hanging over).

"Then I found some such interesting rocks—just what I wanted for my cleavage question—and, on the whole, though you may say in the lovely little letter I got last night about Chamouni and Mrs. Eisenkraemer—though, as I said, you think now I might as well be at home, I am sure you will be glad I stayed.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN."

"I have a little too many irons in the fire." That had been Ruskin's case for many years past, and was to be so, in increasing measure, for many years to come. He saw already how great would be the demands of his Oxford duties, as he chose to interpret them, and was anxious to save some work from his old accumulations from the impending maelstrom. "I shall give a good two months to my botany," he wrote to his mother (August 19), "when I come home,—first, for fear it gets 'off the boil.'" Then he purposed writing a companion essay to *The Queen of the Air* on the Myths of Apollo. But time did not suffice. The botany went "off the boil" until 1875, when the first part of *Proserpina* appeared, and the essay on Apollo never got itself written, though his Oxford lectures contained occasional references to Apolline myths.[1] If the reader will look on to the

[1] See, for instance, *Lectures on Art*, §§ 151–157 (Vol. XX.).

account in the next volume of the immense pains which Ruskin took in preparing his Oxford work, no surprise will be felt at the abandonment of these other plans. The wonder is that Ruskin managed to do everything that he did in the time. He did not return from the Continent till the end of August, 1869; his Inaugural Lectures at Oxford began on February 8, 1870. The five intervening months were spent at Denmark Hill in unceasing work, with occasional visits to Oxford. But in December and January he published papers in the *Geological Magazine* (reserved for a later volume); in December he gave at Woolwich the lecture on "The Future of England," which was included in the later editions of *The Crown of Wild Olive;* and on February 4 he gave at the Royal Institution the lecture on Verona, which stands last in the present volume. He packed close into it the thoughts and observations made during the summer of 1869, and even so the material overflowed, as in the case of Abbeville, into an exhibition, with a printed catalogue.

The minor pieces collected in this volume have been sufficiently discussed in foregoing pages; it remains to give some further notes upon the longer writings, *The Cestus of Aglaia* and *The Queen of the Air.*

"THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA"

The papers entitled *The Cestus of Aglaia* are here, for the first time, published together in their entirety. A sub-title—"Nine Papers on the Laws of Art"—would indicate their general drift, and the titles supplied to the chapters give an outline of their contents. The author's object was, as he says, to define "some of the simplest laws which are binding on Art practice and judgment" (§ 6, p. 57)—laws, "for present practice of Art in our schools, which may be admitted, if not with absolute, at least with a sufficient consent, by leading artists" (§ 87, p. 135). The Prefatory chapter and part of chapter i. illustrate the desirability of finding and keeping such laws; and he then discusses in turn the relation of pure outline to suggestion of shade (ch. i.); the functions of Modesty, Patience, and speed in art (chs. ii.–iv.); the besetting dangers of the practice of etching (ch. v.); the vice of Liberty, and contrary virtue, Continence, in art (ch. vi.); the limits of material (ch. vii.); the relation between public and private art (ch. viii.); and the powers and scope of various kinds of engraving (ch. ix.). He had intended, in a further paper, to

continue the subject by discussing the technical laws of that branch of art (see p. 159); but the series was not continued, and the subject was afterwards treated elsewhere—in his Oxford course of lectures published under the title *Ariadne Florentina*.

To this earlier, as to that later, discussion Ruskin gave a title with classical associations. He called these essays on the Laws of Art "The Cestus of Aglaia"; that is, "The Girdle of the Grace" (§ 58, p. 107). Aglaia, as he has explained (Vol. XVII. pp. 224 *n.*, 226), was the personification of Grace, "always gladdening, and true wife of Vulcan, or Labour." He chose the title from the fourteenth book of the *Iliad*, where Aphrodite (into whom the conception of Aglaia merges[1]) presents to Hera her cestus, "in which all things are wrought" (see below, p. 49 *n.*). And, in so choosing his title, he had, as he says (p. 65), a double thought. It was "partly in memory of these outcast fancies of the great masters"—those fancies, that is, in which men of old time had connected their own powers and activities with spiritual forces; and thus Ruskin's first thought was to express in his title his abiding, and ever strengthening, conviction of the spiritual power of art. But, secondly, he intended by the title to indicate that the virtues which the Greeks personified, or included, in their conception of Grace were themselves the virtues of fine art. The arts, he meant in the first place, only reach their highest power when the girdle of Grace confines their activities and directs their choice. And then, further—with thoughts of Chaucer and of Spenser here mingling in his mind—he drew out his Laws of Art from the specific virtues which might be conceived as giving to the Cestus of Aglaia its power and charm. Thus of Modesty, he says (p. 72), that "her fingers are among the deftest in laying the ground-threads of Aglaia's Cestus"—that Modestia who is

> "as polisht yvory
> Which cunning craftesman hand hath overlayd
> With fayre vermilion on pure castory."[2]

Sometimes he discusses the links in the Cestus itself; at others, he makes his point by examining opponent points—as when he contrasts the inclination of art towards what is dark or foul (p. 107) with the power of Aglaia who is always bright and gladdening; and so, too, in discussing "that evil liberty" which is the opposite of Continence, the golden clasp of Aglaia's Cestus (p. 119).

[1] See *Munera Pulveris*, § 101 (Vol. XVII. p. 226).
[2] See *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 393).

The Cestus of Aglaia has thus a consistent thread; but it is written desultorily, as the author says (p. 135), and in large part the thought is not so clear that he who runs may read it. In the matter of style, there is a marked transition between the first six chapters, which were written at one time, and the last three, which were written at another time and in a more obvious manner. It is to the earlier chapters that the description of their style given in *The Queen of the Air* (§ 134, p. 408) applies. In writing them, Ruskin "said all that came into his head for his own pleasure." A great deal came into his head. "I am almost sick and giddy (though perfectly well)," he said himself, "with the quantity of things in my head—trains of thought beginning and branching to infinity, crossing each other, and all tempting and wanting to be worked out."[1] It is not always easy to follow the criss-cross of Ruskin's thoughts when he writes with running pen whatever comes into his head, and the editors have therefore thought that elucidatory notes would not be out of place (*e.g.*, on pp. 64, 87). These same chapters contain not only passages which are thus very characteristic of the working of Ruskin's mind, but others also which are among the most eloquent and felicitous to be found in his writings. The praise of the railway engine (p. 61) is a case in point, though it is little known. The description of the fly as a type of liberty (p. 123) is another. The papers on *The Cestus of Aglaia* were, as we have seen, not completed. Ruskin had to break them off in order to take a much needed holiday;[2] and the small response which the papers had met with did not encourage him to resume them. His idea had been to draw up Laws of Art in co-operation with other teachers and artists (pp. 58, 70); but no answer came to his invitation (p. 134). This is, perhaps, not altogether to be wondered at. Just as it is possible to understand the bewilderment of business men when invited to govern their commercial transactions by reference to Archytas and the Gran Nemico,[3] so it is not difficult to believe that artists or students, into whose hands the *Art Journal* may have fallen, may have been put off from taking up the author's more practical points by some puzzlement over Homer's Aglaia and Chaucer's hill of sand and the Grison Grey. The author confessed that he himself was entangled in "the web of these old enigmas" (p. 87).

However this may have been, *The Cestus of Aglaia* was not completed, nor did Ruskin republish the papers in their original form,

[1] This is the concluding sentence of the letter to his mother of August 8, 1869, given above (p. liv.).
[2] See Vol. XVIII. p. xxxvi.
[3] See Vol. XVII. p. lxxxii.

though he detached passages from them for use elsewhere. It is only in this complete edition of his works that an opportunity has arrived for reprinting the original papers fully. The treatment of the *text* is explained in the Bibliographical Note (below, p. 45). The *manuscript* of portions of the papers has been collated for this edition. That of chapter ii., written on twelve sheets of ruled white quarto paper and (at the end) on one sheet of ruled blue foolscap (this latter showing hardly any corrections, and perhaps representing a second, fair, copy), is in the possession of Mr. William Ward. It bears out what the author says of the style, being written *currente calamo*, and with many alterations made as he went along. A page is here given in *facsimile* (p. 72), and an interesting passage is added in a footnote (p. 75). The manuscript of chapters vii., viii., and ix. is in the MS. book which contains also *The Ethics of the Dust* and the lecture on "War" (used in *The Crown of Wild Olive*). This book is in Mr. Allen's possession. The MS. of these later chapters for the *Cestus* shows very few erasures or variations from the printed text.

"THE QUEEN OF THE AIR"

In *The Queen of the Air* Ruskin took up the studies in Greek mythology which had already begun to fascinate him when he was writing the fifth volume of *Modern Painters*.[1] The fascination had grown gradually upon him, as he saw ever deeper meanings in the myths, and recognised more and more fully a religious sincerity behind them. It is interesting to contrast the subtle analysis in this volume, in the case of the myths of Æolus,[2] of what, some years before (1854), he had half dismissed as "paltry fables"; and, so in re-reading at a later date the second volume of *Modern Painters* (1845), where he had said that "no spirit power was in the vision" of the Greek god of battle, he noted the correction in *The Queen of the Air* of that "false bias."[3] The present study of the Greek myths of Athena is among the most characteristic of Ruskin's books, and contains some of his most poignant passages—passages which, as Carlyle said,[4] go into the heart like arrows. Also it abounds in flashes of insight. The book,

[1] See Vol. VII. p. lxii.
[2] See §§ 19–30, pp. 310–327; with which contrast *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 78 (Vol. XII. p. 103).
[3] Vol. IV. p. 330 and *n*.
[4] See above, p. lviii.

says a friend of Ruskin's, who in another art has sometimes sought in these late days to touch the beautiful mythology of Greece, "is one of the most delightfully poetic treatises upon Greek myth as connected with cloud and storm ever penned. No one else could have touched the subject with so delicate a hand. In this little book Ruskin has set forth his pantheism, and displayed his consummate understanding of that side of the Greek temperament which was in sympathy with mountains, clouds, and streams. It would seem to have been inspired by Helios and Artemis, by Kore and Demeter; the pen with which he wrote it diffuses the many tints of Iris' bow into far-reaching words, turning sensitive visions into realities, and burning thoughts into visible flames."[1] But the book is discursive and difficult, and as Ruskin supplied no detailed list of contents, a short summary is added in this edition (see below, p. 421). This may be acceptable to some readers, while it will help to the better understanding of the book in relation to the moods and circumstances in which it was written. It is divided into Lectures, and includes a good many pages which were so delivered, but for the rest the division into lectures is only a literary form. A glance at the abstract of contents will at once show one characteristic of *The Queen of the Air*—namely, its discursiveness. It is only the first lecture which keeps with any closeness to the title of the book. The link with the Greek myths of Athena is slight in the second lecture, and in the third it hardly exists at all. Such connexion as there is comes not so much from any indications in Greek mythology or art as from a personification in Ruskin's mind. At this time he formed an ideal conception of Athena, and attributed to her guidance or inspiration whatever interests, thoughts, schemes, and hopes were occupying his mind, just as presently he did with "St. Ursula" or "St. George." We see, then, in the discursive contents of this book a reflection of the course of his thoughts and doings, as they have been traced in this Introduction. He had planned a "concentration on antiquities" (p. xliv.), and at the beginning, and at the end, of the book his studies in Greek art and mythology are embodied. But the concentration did not take place. He had materials for a treatise on the myths of Apollo (§ 44[2]); he proposed to collect and complete the studies, which he had begun in the last volume of *Modern Painters*, of the Pegasean and Gorgonian legends (§ 30); he meant "to work

[1] "Ruskin as I knew Him," by Sir W. B. Richmond, K.C.B., R.A., in *St. George*, October 1902, vol. v. p. 292.

[2] And see above, p. lxi.

out thoroughly by itself" the myth of Sisyphus (§ 29); and he wished to prepare an essay on the ethical nature of the Homeric poems in relation to mythology (§ 17). But, so far as the study of Greek mythology went, the book remained a fragment; a collection, he calls it, of "desultory memoranda on a most noble subject" (Preface, p. 291). He diverged from Homer and Hesiod to his studies in botany, his principles of Political Economy, his suggestions for dealing with the unemployed. The actual contents of the book were, as will be seen from the Bibliographical Note (p. 283), brought together from various sources. It should be remembered, further, that the book was not closely revised, in its final stages, by Ruskin. He entrusted the work to Professor Norton, but the suggestions of his friend were not encouragingly received, and in the end, we are told, "the volume appeared without any proper revision."[1]

In considering *The Queen of the Air* as a contribution to the study of Greek mythology, the reader should remember the date at which it was written. The views of the philological school, headed by Max Müller, were then in the ascendant. "Comparative Mythology," as the philological school understood the term, consisted of a comparison of the roots of words; mythology was "a disease of language," and the common origin of all the myths was to be found in natural, and especially in solar, phenomena. This is the doctrine to which, by implication, Ruskin assented; indeed he expressly refers, in his Preface (p. 292), to "the splendid investigation of recent philologists," and "it is the task of the Philologists," he says (§ 1, p. 296), "to account for the errors of antiquity." Another school has, since Ruskin wrote, won much acceptance, and in this country has been widely popularised by the writings of Mr. Andrew Lang. This school pursues the methods of Comparative Anthropology, studies the beliefs and legends of contemporary or recent savagedom, and finds the origin of Greek (as of other) myths in the corresponding fancies of savage ancestors, from whom the Greeks of the civilised age inherited ideas no worthier, or in any essential respect other, than those of Bushmen and Red Indians.

In reading Ruskin's book it is necessary to bear this later view in mind; for, if we accept it, many corrections and reservations, and some refutations, would become necessary. Ruskin says, for instance, in one of his mythological essays, that the legend of Arachne "at

[1] Professor C. E. Norton's Preface to the "Brantwood" (American) edition of *The Queen of the Air*, p. x.; and see the *Letters to Norton*, vol. i. p. 213.

first sight, like many other stories of the kind, seems not only degrading, but meaningless; the old mythologists, however, always made their best fables rough on the outside";[1] and he goes on to suggest an intention therein on their part. But according to the anthropological school, the degrading element in Greek mythology was a survival from savagery, and later poets or philosophers sought to rationalise it away. For instance, in another essay, Ruskin finds a moral significance in the ant-born myrmidons;[2] the anthropological school explains such myths as survivals from animal-worship and from the claim of some savage tribe to be descended from the object of the worship. If these theories be correct, much of Ruskin's interpretation must be dismissed as unscientific. But there are important distinctions to be made. Ruskin did not profess to be discussing the origins of myths. It is a study of the greatest importance, and in some measure its results must colour all other studies in mythology. In some measure, but not altogether. To discover the origin of any phase of life is not the same thing as to explain that phase. It makes very little contribution to the study of Shakespeare to announce that the Elizabethan drama was developed from morality and miracle plays; the beating of the savage tom-tom throws little light on the symphonies of Beethoven; nor can Raphael be interpreted by the scratched lines of a reindeer on the rock. What Ruskin is occupied with in this book is the meaning of myths, as they had been refined by the poets and the philosophers, or as they were believed, not by the savage ancestors of the Greeks, but by the Greeks for whom Homer and Pindar wrote. He did not concern himself, except incidentally (§ 72), with the lower phases of mythology. "The great question in reading a story is always," he says, "not what wild hunter dreamed, or what childish race first dreaded it; but what wise man first perfectly told, and what strong people first perfectly lived by it" (§ 7, p. 301). And so, in "The Tortoise of Ægina," § 17, he says, "What you have to discern, in any of the myths that have long dwelt in human thought, is not, what fact they represented, but what colour they were intended to give to it." It is true, however, that Ruskin accepted, as we have seen, a theory of the origin of myths which, according to the anthropological school, is erroneous, and which in any case is probably pushed too far. But here it should be remembered that there is a certain amount of common ground. No one disputes that many myths arose from the personification of natural phenomena, or that the poets and philosophers of

[1] "The Story of Arachne," § 20, in Vol. XX.
[2] See "The Tortoise of Ægina," § 17, in Vol. XX.

Greece refined upon the earlier imaginations of the people. There must, therefore, remain, on any theory, a wide field for ingenuity and sympathetic imagination to work upon in the interpretation of the myths of an educated people. Ruskin claimed, and not without reason, that his long study of the clouds and fields and rocks gave him an opportunity of entering sympathetically into the interpretation of nature-myths and nature-poets.[1] Mythology is like romance; it is an expression of wonder. In some ways no one was better able than Ruskin, in whom the eyes of wonder were never closed, to enter into the visions and thoughts of the early children of men. On the other hand, the ingenuity of his mind, which so often worked (to use a phrase of his own) "like a Virgilian simile, many thoughts in one,"[2] may not always have been a sound interpreter of less fanciful writers, or have served to keep him from pushing a favourite idea too far. A typical instance of his ingenuity, which readers are likely to consider illuminative or far-fetched according to their conceptions of the Homeric spirit, will be found in § 19 (see the note thereon, p. 311). After all, there must inevitably be much that is arbitrary in the interpretation of myths. There was no fixed code of mythology, and no theories of the origin of myths can ever solve the later developments of them.

> "Vain mortals imagine that gods like themselves are begotten,
> With human sensations and voice and corporeal members."[3]

So also each poet made his myth largely in accordance with his own fancy; and each interpreter of the poetical mythology is apt to read his own thoughts into it. No one, says Ruskin, can in such matters be absolutely right (Preface, p. 291); and again, there are pieces of enigmatical teaching which "may evidently mean just what we like" (*Cestus of Aglaia*, p. 84). What Ruskin liked the myths of Athena to mean may not always be supportable by evidence, and in some cases the evidence he cites is of doubtful value. He was given to pressing into his service all words that suited (as, for instance, when he finds a mythical significance in the application of the common epithet, cold, to a particular mountain top, § 26); and he was particularly arbitrary in collecting his illustrative passages from authors of all dates, even dovetailing in with a passage, it

[1] Compare Vol. VII. p. lxiii.
[2] *Love's Meinie*, § 44.
[3] Xenophanes of Colophon (translated in *Supernatural Religion*, vol. i. p. 76).

may be, from Homer another from some obscure grammarian or fabulist of a thousand years later (§ 23); but the thoughts, guesses, or fancies of so acute and ingenious a mind can seldom fail to be suggestive. Ruskin speaks elsewhere (below, p. 174) of the visions of the poets expressing themselves "tremulously, as far-off lights of heaven through terrestrial air"; he himself had peculiarly the gift of catching such lights, and making them flash forth their many-coloured message. Often, no doubt, the message may be his, rather than theirs; but it is the privilege of any noble art or literature to have many meanings for many minds, and Ruskin's *Queen of the Air* will, to sympathetic readers, often make a passage in the old poems, or some type in the old art, yet more "beautiful with haunting thought" (§ 108). And so the reader is not unlikely to be of the same opinion with Carlyle, whose letter to Ruskin about the book was as follows:—

"CHELSEA, *August* 17, 1869.

"DEAR RUSKIN,—Your excellent, kind, and loving little note from Vevey reached me, but nothing since, not even precise news at second-hand, which I have much desired. The blame of my not answering and inciting was not mine, but that of my poor rebellious right hand, which oftenest refuses altogether to do any writing for me that can be read; having already done too much, it probably thinks! I did practically want a little thing of you at *Baireuth*, if you should pause there: *Photographs*—two portraits of Wilhelmina which I had heard of—but the *right hand* mumbled always, 'You *can* do without them, you *know!*' and at length I lazily assented.

"What I wish now is to know if you are at home, and to see you instantly, if so. *Instantly!* For I am not unlikely to be off in a few days (by *Steamer some* whither) and again miss you. Come, I beg, *quam primum!*

"Last week I got your *Queen of the Air* and read it. Euge! Euge! No such Book have I met with for long years past. The one soul now in the world who seems to feel as I do on the highest matters, and speaks *mir aus dem Herzen* exactly what I wanted to hear! As to the natural history of those old Myths, I remained here and there a little uncertain, but as to the meanings you put into them, never anywhere. All these things I not only 'agree' with, but would use Thor's Hammer, if I had it, to enforce and put in action on this rotten world. Well done, well done! and pluck up a heart, and continue again and again. And don't say 'most great thoughts are dressed *in shrouds:*'[1] many, many are the Phœbus Apollo celestial arrows you still have to shoot into the foul Pythons and poisonous abominable Megatheriums and Plesiosaurians that go staggering about, large as cathedrals, in our sunk Epoch again.

[1] A reference to § 17: see below, p. 309.

"I have had a great deal to do with *insomnia*, etc., etc., since that last Wednesday evening; come back, I tell you, while it is still time. With kind regards to the dear old Mother,

"Yours ever,

"T. CARLYLE."

The pages on Greek art which conclude *The Queen of the Air*—drawing out from the study of a single coin, the Hercules of Camarina, the characteristics of Greek art—are a most characteristic discourse: so suggestive and penetrating that one cannot but regret the abandonment by Ruskin of other half-completed studies in the same sort. Some of these are printed as an appendix to Volume XX. The present lecture should be read in connexion with the further analysis of the same subject in *Aratra Pentelici*, contained also in the next volume. *The Queen of the Air* was a favourite book with its author. "It is the best I ever wrote," he said to Miss Beever—"the last which I took thorough loving pains with, and the first which I did with full knowledge of sorrow." And so again, to the same correspondent, "It pleases me especially that you have read *The Queen of the Air*. As far as I know, myself, of my books, it is the most useful and careful piece I have done."[1] It passed through several editions (being now in its 26th thousand), but it was never revised by Ruskin, though Mr. Faunthorpe (of Whitelands College) who passed the sheets of a new edition through the press in 1883, incorporated a few notes from the author's copy and made some trivial alterations in the text. There are, therefore, comparatively few variations in the *text* to notice (see Bibliographical Note, p. 286). No manuscript of the book is known to the editors, except the author's first draft of several pages of Lecture i., which is at Brantwood, in a note-book containing also portions of a catalogue of Ruskin's collection of minerals. A page of this MS. is given in *facsimile* (p. 297).

With regard to the *text* and *manuscript* of the other writings included in this volume, the paper on "Sir Joshua and Holbein" is reprinted from the *Cornhill Magazine*, and there are no variations of text to record. It was, as already explained, a chapter crowded out from *Modern Painters*. The MS. (on fourteen pages of blue foolscap)—as also the proof sheets and the revise of the paper—is in Mr. Allen's possession. On the back of one sheet of the MS. is an early draft of a passage upon the bud, in the fifth volume of *Modern Painters*. The

[1] *Hortus Inclusus*, pp. 1, 122 (ed. 1902); reprinted in a later volume of this edition.

MS. was collated for this edition, and a few passages are here added from it (pp. 9, 12). A *facsimile* of a page of the MS. is also given (between pp. 16, 17).

Of *The Study of Architecture* (reprinted from the *Proceedings* of the Institute), no MS. is known to the editors.

The treatment of the *text* of *The Cestus of Aglaia* has been already explained, and particulars of the manuscript have been given.

The manuscripts of the lectures on "National Art and National Ethics" and on "Modern Art" (here printed for the first time) are at Brantwood. They are in the hand of Ruskin's servant, Crawley, with corrections and additions in Ruskin's own.

The manuscript of the lecture on "The Flamboyant Architecture of the Valley of the Somme" is in the possession of Mr. Wedderburn, to whom Ruskin gave it. Some of it is in the hand of Crawley, and a small portion of it is in that of Mrs. Severn; but the greater part is in Ruskin's own hand. Here and there the MS. is imperfect; in such places the passages are supplied from a *verbatim* note of the lecture as delivered, copies of which are in possession of the editors.

The manuscript of "Verona and its Rivers" is at Brantwood. It is largely Crawley's copy, corrected by the author.

The *Illustrations*, like the literary contents of this volume, are diversified in character.

The *frontispiece*—a reproduction of Ruskin's copy of a St. Catherine by Luini—is chosen from a painter whose pre-eminence he often proclaims in this volume and elsewhere in his books. "Of Luini," he asks in *The Cestus of Aglaia* (§ 54), "what do the English public yet so much as care to know?" The revelation of Luini to the English public was one of the works on which Ruskin prided himself.[1] Luini, he says, again in *The Cestus*,[2] "is, perhaps, the best central type of the highly trained Italian painter . . . every touch he lays is eternal, every thought he conceives is beautiful and pure: his hand moves always in radiance of blessing." So, in the lecture on "Flamboyant Architecture," Luini is taken as an example of "the central Italian school,"[3] and this copy from his St. Catherine was shown as likely to convey "a better impression than an ordinary engraving could of a work in itself so beautiful that I do not fear but that you will find

[1] Epilogue of 1883 to the second volume of *Modern Painters*, § 13 (Vol. IV. p. 355); and compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 46.

[2] § 83 (below, pp. 130–131).

[3] Compare also *Lectures on Art*, §§ 73, 92; *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 71, 72; and *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iii. § 46.

some reflex of its true character, even in this its shadow" (p. 248). And so, again, in the lecture on Verona, Luini is included among the artists representative of "the Age of the Masters" (p. 448).

The appreciation of Luini was one of the main tasks which Ruskin had set himself in the summer of 1862. He had, as already stated,[1] undertaken to report to the Arundel Society on the artist's frescoes at Milan and in neighbouring places, and in subsequent years the Society published chromo-lithographs of several of them.[2] Ruskin's own work was concentrated on the frescoes in San Maurizio (or, Monastero Maggiore); the copy here reproduced is of the figure of St. Catherine, which is on the right of the altar in the third chapel (to the right of the high altar). Ruskin reported the progress of his work in letters to his father:—

> "MILAN, *June* 13.—I never saw anything so beautiful in sacred art as Luini's Christs in St. Maurizio here, or the remnants of them at least; for after the battle of Magenta the church was made a military hospital, and you can fancy what became of the frescoes."
>
> "*June* 16.—I am better, and settled to Luini's frescoes. It is not oppressively warm anywhere, and in the church where I work all is exactly right—no draughts—no heat—no damp—and no flies. The frescoes as grand as can be, and rapidly perishing from the grossest ill-usage. Nails have been driven into the finest faces, to fasten up bed-curtains for the wounded after Magenta. Two rooms, the size of our drawing-room, would have done as well, but the Italians couldn't, it seems, provide so much."
>
> "*June* 29.—I think I see my way now with some little distinctness. St. Catherine promises well, and seems likely to be painted and dressed in less than three weeks."
>
> "*July* 25.—I have been examining St. Catherine from head to foot, and she's coming so nice that I'm in no mind to spoil her or leave her unfinished for a day more or less. There's a corner of one of her lips which will take a day yet, and two or three curls of hair which will take another; then there's a little finger and bit of back of hand; and some of her gold brocade wants retouching."
>
> "MORNEX, *September* 14.—I am truly glad you like St. Catherine. I was entirely certain you *would have* liked her, had I got her finished; but the head is so infinitely inferior to what I meant it to be, the hot weather rendering it impossible to work delicately enough, that I feared it would seem coarse and valueless. The bit

[1] Vol. XVII. p. liii.

[2] The drawings, from which the chromo-lithographs were executed, are in the National Gallery.

of wheel and drapery at the bottom is tolerably good (note how the weight of wheel pulls her dress straight from her knee)—that is, tolerably like; the right hand is carefully drawn in contour, and the little finger in it pretty well painted and like; the crown, and the chain over her left shoulder, are well painted (laid in at once and never touched afterwards), and there is a great deal of good work, all but lost and hidden, in the hair; a feeling of it coming through, so also in the mouth. Great part of the time and labour were spent in measuring and placing the curls of the hair; the place of every touch is of importance in the expression. There is some decisive painting in the red drapery with golden lyres on it. The rest is all mess and makeshift."

Ruskin, it will be remembered,[1] had Burne-Jones with him at Milan in 1862, and the young painter was also pressed into the service of copying Luini's frescoes in San Maurizio:—

"I am drawing from a fresco," wrote Burne-Jones, "that has never been seen since the day it was painted, in jet darkness, in a chapel where candlesticks, paper flowers, and wooden dolls abound freely. Ruskin, by treacherous smiles and winning courtesies and delicate tips, has wheedled the very candlesticks off the altar for my use, and the saint's table and his everything that was his, and I draw every day now by the light of eight altar candles; also a fat man stands at the door and says the church is shut if anybody comes, and when the priest himself put his head in, the fat man said, 'Hush—sh—sh—sh!' and frightened poor priest away."

Burne-Jones soon caught Ruskin's enthusiasm for Luini, and some years later advised a friend who was travelling in Italy to "hunt him out everywhere. Never were any faces so perfect; for they are perfect like Greek ones, and have fourteen hundred years of tenderness and pity added."[2]

Seven years later, in the tour of 1869 which has been described in this Introduction, Ruskin again saw the fresco, as he relates in a letter to his mother:—

"MILAN, *May* 7.—I went to see my St. Catherine directly, and found her half destroyed in the seven years that have passed since. They have had masons at work, making a new door, and let them

[1] See Vol. XVII. p. lxiii.
[2] *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. i. p. 248; vol. ii. p. 66.

put their ladders or anything else against the fresco—as if it were an outside wall—and there is nearly an end of St. Catherine and of the beautiful Christ that was opposite her. So much for young Italy. . . .

"I was better satisfied than I expected to be, very much with my own copy, when I saw the original again. But I am overpowered with the sense of the intolerable misery and bestiality of the people round me, having capacity of all good, and destroyed by their base government."

The copy is in water-colour,[1] life-size, and is painted on several pieces of paper, of different shapes and sizes, which Ruskin afterwards joined together. There are some differences also of tone; the plate here has been slightly touched in order to bring the work better together. The copy was presented by Ruskin to his drawing school at Oxford, where it hangs in the centre of the principal alcove.

The plates introduced into the paper on "Sir Joshua and Holbein" are photogravures from works described in the text. Plate I. is from the engraving by William Sharp (1749–1824) of Reynolds's "Holy Family." The picture itself is unfortunately a wreck, and is no longer exhibited at the National Gallery. Plate II. is a photogravure from the portrait of George Gyzen by Holbein in the Berlin Gallery (see p. 10). Plate III. is from the "Meyer" Madonna in the Dresden Gallery; the original picture by Holbein is at Darmstadt, but it is the Dresden picture which Ruskin describes (p. 13). The figures of St. Barbara and St. Elizabeth, reproduced in Plate IV., are in the Munich Gallery, where they are ascribed to the elder Holbein, but Ruskin believed them to be the work of the younger (p. 14).

In *The Cestus of Aglaia* a plate (V.) of Dürer's "Cannon" is included, as this is a work to which Ruskin frequently refers to illustrate various points in the art of engraving (see p. 113 *n.*).

In the lecture on *Modern Art* Ruskin describes two designs by Burne-Jones—"Love and Alcestis" (Plate VI.) and "The Two Wives of Jason" (Plate VII.). The drawings are in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford, which is rich also in possessing other drawings by Burne-Jones—"quite the most precious gift," said Ruskin, "not excepting even the Loire series of Turners, in the ratified acceptance of which my University has honoured with some fixed memorial the aims

[1] For a note on the colour of the mantle, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 226.

of her first Art-Teacher."[1] The designs here reproduced are beginnings in colour.

The illustrations given in the lecture on Abbeville are six in number. Five of them are from Ruskin's drawings. Plate VIII. is of the Place de l'Amiral Courbet at Abbeville—the Market Place, Ruskin calls it, of Abbeville, with St. Vulfran seen over the houses at the end. The drawing, which is in pencil (20×14), is No. 61 in the Reference Series at Oxford, and is noticed in Ruskin's Catalogue of that collection (Vol. XX.); it was also No. 43 in the exhibition shown in connexion with the Abbeville lecture (see below, p. 276). It is perhaps the most beautiful of all his drawings in this sort; our reproduction, being necessarily reduced in scale, gives only a partial idea of the wealth of detail which the artist put into the work, but which nevertheless does not interfere with the unity of the composition. It appears from his diary that this drawing was begun on September 10, and not finished on October 12.

The next plate (IX.) is a steel-engraving by J. C. Armytage, which Ruskin had prepared, perhaps for his intended *Stones of Abbeville*, but did not publish. The drawing from which the engraving was done was No. 41 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue (p. 276). The subject is St. Vulfran from the east, showing also the old houses of the Pont d'Amour; a more finished drawing from the same point of view is reproduced by photogravure in an earlier volume (Vol. II. p. 398).

Plate XI. shows details from the west front of St. Vulfran. The drawing, which is in wash (10×8), is at Herne Hill.

Plate XII. shows the southern door of the west porch of St. Vulfran. The drawing was apparently No. 48 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue. It is now No. 95 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). It is in pencil and wash (18×12).

Plate XIII. shows a portion of the west front of Rouen Cathedral. It is from a photograph taken for Ruskin by Arthur Burgess; an enlargement from the photograph was No. 49 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue (see p. 277).

The other plate (X.), illustrating the Abbeville lecture, is from a photograph (by Miss Cordelia Marshall, of Skelwith Fold) of a portrait by Titian of the Doge Andrea Gritti. Ruskin bought the picture from the Rev. Gilbert Elliot (Dean of Bristol) for £1000, and it is at Brantwood. He showed it on the occasion of the Abbeville lecture (No. 1 in the Catalogue), and referred to it in the text

[1] *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism* (1878).

(pp. 248, 269). The portrait shows the Doge in a mood less stern, and with less length of nose, than appear in the portrait of the same sitter in the Czernin Gallery at Vienna.[1] A description of the picture by Ruskin's friend, Mr. Tyrwhitt, is here subjoined:—

"The great portrait of the Doge Andrea Gritti, in Professor Ruskin's possession, is as good and as accessible an instance of perfect work in detail, perfectly carried out, as can be wished for. *Perfectly* it is worked out, in this sense: because the Doge, or rather Andrea Gritti the Doge, strikes one at the first glance; there is nothing in the magnificent dress to which the Doge is not superior,—he dignifies his fine clothes, and not they him, although they are finished to absolute completeness and rightness. . . . No person with education, feeling, or soul above buttons can help seeing how great is the art-power which is shown in that accurate finish of the splendid dress, which never for a moment diverts any attention from the stout Lord of the Adriatic. There is no mistaking his fine-cut Cœur-de-Lion type of face, his wide-opened blue eye of good nature and command, his sharply chiselled mouth of action, thick bull-neck of strength, and soft beard and hair of high blood. All this is written down in colour and subtle form for all men to see; but Titian's work was not done when it was written. On the contrary, every line of woven gold in the embroidered cloak plays and reflects light in exactly the right place, as the cunning pattern undulates over its folds. The yellow paint looks exactly like actual gold, so artfully is its tint changed from darker to lighter in each fold of the stuff. It is all separate stripes; and the tint has been changed with methodical exactness in every one, so that the folds of the dress are pointed out by the waving of its pattern. In short, Titian puts the gold work on the Doge's coat of state for exactly the same reason as the Doge put that coat on his body—as a proper accessory, befitting him, and worthy of his office, and requiring proper treatment and care in its subordinate place."[2]

The first of the illustrations to *The Queen of the Air* (Plate XIV.) shows Athena as she appears on a statue found at Herculaneum. The photogravure is reduced from a large drawing of the statue. It is at Brantwood among other diagrams and enlargements, and was probably prepared by one of Ruskin's assistants for exhibition at the lecture on Athena.

The Delphic Apollo (Plate XV.) is reproduced in a woodcut by Mr. Heinrich Uhlrich, an engraver commended by Ruskin, from a drawing on a hydria in the Vatican. It is described by Ruskin in the text (see § 39, and the note there given).

[1] Reproduced at p. 73 of Georg Gronau's *Titian* (1904).

[2] *A Handbook of Pictorial Art*, by the Rev. R. St. John Tyrwhitt, pp. 204–205 (1875 edition).

The subject of the next plate (XVI.) is described in the same part of the text (§ 39). The designs of the Chariot of Apollo (sunrise) and of Athena with Hermes (morning breeze and cloud) are from an amphora in the Louvre. The woodcuts here given (also by Mr. Uhlrich) are reduced from large drawings at Brantwood; doubtless, they also were shown at Ruskin's lecture.

Plate XVII. illustrates the botanical portion of *The Queen of the Air*. It is a photogravure from a drawing by Ruskin of the Erba della Madonna (see § 87, p. 377). The drawing—in pencil ($7 \times 4\frac{3}{4}$)—is No. 19 in the Educational Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.).

In the plate of coins (XVIII.) the centre-piece is the Hercules of Camarina (II. C. 17), discussed by Ruskin in the text (§§ 161 *seq.*). The other coins are (above) the two sides of a coin of Tarentum;[1] on the obverse, is a Tarentine horseman; on the reverse, Taras (the mythical founder of the city) on a dolphin. Ruskin refers to "the dolphin of Tarentum" in *The Study of Architecture* (below, p. 22); and describes the two sides of the coin in *The Cestus of Aglaia* (p. 68). The coin was the subject also of an intended lecture, some notes for which are printed in Vol. XX. Below, on the same plate, is (right) a head of Hera on a coin of Argos (III. B. 36 in the exhibition of electrotypes at the British Museum). The head is said to have been copied from the famous statue of Hera at Argos by Polycleitus. Another head of Hera from an Argive coin is shown on Plate XVIII. in *Aratra Pentelici;* but the "Juno of Argos" referred to in this volume (*Queen of the Air*, § 167) appears rather to be head here given. The remaining head on Plate XVIII. is of Nike, from a coin of the Lucanian Heraclea (III. C. 11 in the British Museum). The coin is referred to in some of Ruskin's notes as characteristic of Greek types; the background is formed by the ægis, with a border of snakes. All the coins on this plate are enlarged to twice their diameter.

The illustrations to "Verona and its Rivers" are all from drawings by Ruskin, made for the most part on the spot in 1869.

Plate XIX. shows a niche on the tomb of Can Signorio. The drawing, here reproduced by chromo-lithography, is in pencil and colour (15×6), and is at Brantwood.

Plate XX. shows the market-place (Piazza d'Erbe). This is from a drawing of 1841 in Ruskin's earlier manner. It is No. 42 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 457), and now No. 62 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). The drawing is in pencil and wash (19×13).

[1] It may be seen in the exhibition of electrotypes at the British Museum (III. C. 10).

Plate XXI. is a study of a capital at Verona. The drawing, which is in pencil and wash on buff paper, is in the collection of Mr. T. F. Taylor.

Plate XXII. shows the upper part of the Tomb of Can Signorio. The drawing, which is in body-colour (20 × 14), is at Brantwood. It was made in 1869, and was No. 32 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 455).

Plate XXIII. shows the Tomb of Can Grande, and is from a photograph combining two of Ruskin's drawings at Oxford—No. 57 in the Reference Series, with details of the sarcophagus added from No. 77 in the Educational Series. The former drawing was probably No. 22 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 454), and Ruskin mentions that the sarcophagus was unfinished; it is in pencil (20 × 13).

Plate XXIV. includes two studies of detail from the same sarcophagus, which Ruskin in the "Verona" Catalogue (No. 24, p. 454) called "The Two Dogs." One is the heraldic dog beside the Madonna of the Annunciation; the other, Can Grande himself, at the battle of Vicenza. The first, in water-colour ($7\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$), is in the possession of Mr. T. F. Taylor, the latter (in pencil) is at Brantwood.

Plate XXV. is from Ruskin's pencil drawing of 1835 of the Castelbarco Tomb; it is at Brantwood. Its inclusion here serves to remind us of Ruskin's early admiration of a monument—"chief among all sepulchral marbles of a land of mourning"[1]—to which he returned with unabated enthusiasm in 1869 (see pp. xlix., 451–453). A drawing of the monument, made in that year, has been given in an earlier volume of this edition.[2]

Plate XXVI. is from a drawing of 1869, showing the Piazza de' Signori. It is No. 43 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 457), and is now No. 80 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). It is in pencil (19 × 13).

E. T. C.

[1] Vol. IX. p. 177.
[2] Plate D in Vol. IX. (p. 176).

I

SIR JOSHUA AND HOLBEIN

(1860)

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This paper first appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* for March 1860, vol. i. pp. 322–328. It was unsigned; but a review in the *Critic*, March 3, 1860, remarked, "There is no need of signature to the charming little article to inform us of the secret of its authorship. None but the pen of John Ruskin could have produced this sketch of the two masters."

The paper was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 221–236 (§§ 149–165); and again in the second edition of that work (1899), vol. i. pp. 225–240 (§§ 149–165).]

SIR JOSHUA AND HOLBEIN

1. LONG ago discarded from our National Gallery, with the contempt logically due to national or English pictures, —lost to sight and memory for many a year in the Ogygian seclusions of Marlborough House—there have reappeared at last, in more honourable exile at Kensington, two great pictures by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Two, with others; but these alone worth many an entanglement among the cross-roads of the West, to see for half-an-hour by spring sunshine:—the *Holy Family*, and the *Graces*, side by side now in the principal room. Great, as ever was work wrought by man. In placid strength, and subtlest science, unsurpassed;—in sweet felicity, incomparable.[1]

2. If you truly want to know what good work of painter's hand is, study those two pictures from side to side, and miss no inch of them (you will hardly, eventually, be inclined to miss one): in some respects there is no execution like it; none so open in the magic. For the work of other great men is hidden in its wonderfulness—you cannot see how it was done. But in Sir Joshua's there is no mystery: it is all amazement. No question but that the touch was so laid; only that it *could* have been so laid, is a marvel for ever. So also there is no painting so majestic in sweetness. He is lily-sceptred: his power blossoms, but burdens not. All other men of equal dignity paint more slowly; all others of equal force

[1] [For another reference to the "Holy Family" (No. 78), no longer publicly exhibited (owing to its bad state of preservation), see Vol. III. p. 30. The picture is here illustrated from an engraving (Plate I.). "The Graces decorating a Statue of Hymen" is No. 79 in the National Gallery; the picture is a fancy portrait of the three daughters of Sir William Montgomery. For another reference to it, see Vol. XIV. p. 472.]

paint less lightly. Tintoret lays his line like a king marking the boundaries of conquered lands; but Sir Joshua leaves it as a summer wind its trace on a lake; he could have painted on a silken veil, where it fell free, and not bent it.

8. Such at least is his touch when it is life that he paints: for things lifeless he has a severer hand. If you examine that picture of the *Graces* you will find it reverses all the ordinary ideas of expedient treatment. By other men flesh is firmly painted, but accessories lightly. Sir Joshua paints accessories firmly,* flesh lightly;—nay, flesh not at all, but spirit. The wreath of flowers he feels to be material; and gleam by gleam strikes fearlessly the silver and violet leaves out of the darkness. But the three maidens are less substantial than rose petals. No flushed nor frosted tissue that ever faded in night wind is so tender as they; no hue may reach, no line measure, what is in them so gracious and so fair. Let the hand move softly—itself as a spirit; for this is Life, of which it touches the imagery.

4. "And yet——"

Yes: you do well to pause. There is a "yet" to be thought of. I did not bring you to these pictures to see wonderful work merely, or womanly beauty merely. I brought you chiefly to look at that Madonna, believing that you might remember other Madonnas, unlike her; and might think it desirable to consider wherein the difference lay:—other Madonnas not by Sir Joshua, who painted Madonnas but seldom. Who perhaps, if truth must be told, painted them never: for surely this dearest pet of an English girl, with the little curl of lovely hair under her ear, is *not* one.

5. Why did not Sir Joshua—or could not—or would not

* As showing gigantic power of hand, joined with utmost accuracy and rapidity, the folds of drapery under the breast of the Virgin are, perhaps, as marvellous a piece of work as could be found in any picture, of whatever time or master.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

The Holy Family

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Sir Joshua—paint Madonnas? neither he, nor his great rival-friend Gainsborough?[1] Both of them painters of women, such as since Giorgione and Correggio had not been; both painters of men, such as had not been since Titian. How is it that these English friends can so brightly paint that particular order of humanity which we call "gentlemen and ladies," but neither heroes, nor saints, nor angels? Can it be because they were both country-bred boys, and for ever after strangely sensitive to courtliness? Why, Giotto also was a country-bred boy. Allegri's native Correggio, Titian's Cadore, were but hill villages; yet these men painted not the court, nor the drawing-room, but the Earth: and not a little of Heaven besides: while our good Sir Joshua never trusts himself outside the park palings. He could not even have drawn the strawberry girl,[2] unless she had got through a gap in them—or rather, I think, she must have been let in at the porter's lodge, for her strawberries are in a pottle, ready for the ladies at the Hall. Giorgione would have set them, wild and fragrant, among their leaves, in her hand. Between his fairness, and Sir Joshua's May-fairness, there is a strange, impassable limit—as of the white reef that in Pacific isles encircles their inner lakelets, and shuts them from the surf and sound of sea. Clear and calm they rest, reflecting fringed shadows of the palm-trees, and the passing of fretted clouds across their own sweet circle of blue sky. But beyond, and round and round their coral bar, lies the blue of sea and heaven together—blue of eternal deep.

6. You will find it a pregnant question, if you follow it forth, and leading to many others, not trivial, Why it is, that in Sir Joshua's girl, or Gainsborough's, we always think first of the Ladyhood; but in Giotto's, of the Womanhood? Why, in Sir Joshua's hero, or Vandyck's,

[1] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 378), and *Academy Notes*, 1859 (Vol. XIV. p. 223).]

[2] ["The Strawberry Girl" (exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1773) is No. 40 in the Wallace Collection, Hertford House.]

it is always the Prince or the Sir whom we see first; but in Titian's, the man.

Not that Titian's gentlemen are less finished than Sir Joshua's; but their gentlemanliness* is not the principal thing about them; their manhood absorbs, conquers, wears it as a despised thing. Nor—and this is another stern ground of separation—will Titian make a gentleman of every one he paints. He will make him so if he is so, not otherwise; and this not merely in general servitude to truth, but because, in his sympathy with deeper humanity, the courtier is not more interesting to him than any one else. "You have learned to dance and fence; you can speak with clearness, and think with precision; your hands are small, your senses acute, and your features well-shaped. Yes: I see all this in you, and will do it justice. You shall stand as none but a well-bred man could stand; and your fingers shall fall on the sword-hilt as no fingers could but those that knew the grasp of it. But for the rest, this grisly fisherman, with rusty cheek and rope-frayed hand, is a man as well as you, and might possibly make several of you, if souls were divisible. His bronze colour is quite as interesting to me, Titian, as your paleness, and his hoary spray of stormy hair takes the light as well as your waving curls. Him also I will paint, with such picturesqueness as he may have; yet not putting the picturesqueness first in him, as in you I have not put the gentlemanliness first. In him I see a strong human creature, contending with all hardship: in you also a human creature, uncontending, and possibly not strong. Contention

* The reader must observe that I use the word here in a limited sense, as meaning only the effect of careful education, good society, and refined habits of life, on average temper and character. Of deep and true gentlemanliness—based as it is on intense sensibility and sincerity, perfected by courage, and other qualities of race; as well as of that union of insensibility with cunning, which is the essence of vulgarity, I shall have to speak at length in another place.[1]

[1] [A reference to the chapter on Vulgarity in the fifth volume of *Modern Painters*, which was published three months after the present paper appeared.]

or strength, weakness or picturesqueness, and all other such accidents in either, shall have due place. But the immortality and miracle of you—this clay that burns, this colour that changes—are in truth the awful things in both: these shall be first painted—and last."

7. With which question respecting treatment of character we have to connect also this further one: How is it that the attempts of so great painters as Reynolds and Gainsborough are, beyond portraiture, limited almost like children's? No domestic drama—no history—no noble natural scenes, far less any religious subject:—only market carts; girls with pigs; woodmen going home to supper; watering-places; grey cart-horses in fields, and such like. Reynolds, indeed, once or twice touched higher themes,—"among the chords his fingers laid,"[1] and recoiled: wisely; for, strange to say, his very sensibility deserts him when he leaves his courtly quiet. The horror of the subjects he chose (Cardinal Beaufort and Ugolino)[2] showed inherent apathy: had he felt deeply, he would not have sought for this strongest possible excitement of feeling,—would not willingly have dwelt on the worst conditions of despair—the despair of the ignoble. His religious subjects are conceived even with less care than these. Beautiful as it is, this Holy Family by which we stand has neither dignity nor sacredness, other than those which attach to every group of gentle mother and ruddy babe; while his Faiths, Charities, or other well-ordered and emblem-fitted virtues, are even less lovely than his ordinary portraits of women.[3]

It was a faultful temper, which, having so mighty a power of realization at command, never became so much

[1] [Compare Scott's "amid the strings his finger stray'd" (*Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Introduction) and "among the strings his fingers range" (*Rokeby*, canto v. stanza 19).]

[2] ["The Death of Cardinal Beaufort" (illustrating *Henry VI.*, part ii. Act iii.), painted for Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery in 1790, is at Petworth; the sketch for the picture is in the Dulwich Gallery (No. 264). The picture of "Ugolino and his Sons," exhibited at the Academy in 1773, is at Knole; a study for the head of Ugolino is in the National Gallery (No. 106).]

[3] [Reynolds's designs for the "Seven Virtues" were executed in the window of the ante-chapel at New College, Oxford; for another reference to the window, see Vol. XVI. p. 417.]

interested in any fact of human history as to spend one touch of heartfelt skill upon it;—which, yielding momentarily to indolent imagination, ended, at best, in a Puck, or a Thais; a Mercury as Thief, or a Cupid as Linkboy.[1] How wide the interval between this gently trivial humour, guided by the wave of a feather, or arrested by the enchantment of a smile,—and the habitual dwelling of the thoughts of the great Greeks and Florentines among the beings and the interests of the eternal world!

8. In some degree it may indeed be true that the modesty and sense of the English painters are the causes of their simple practice. All that they did, they did well, and attempted nothing over which conquest was doubtful. They knew they could paint men and women: it did not follow that they could paint angels. Their own gifts never appeared to them so great as to call for serious question as to the use to be made of them. "They could mix colours and catch likeness—yes; but were they therefore able to teach religion, or reform the world? To support themselves honourably, pass the hours of life happily, please their friends, and leave no enemies, was not this all that duty could require, or prudence recommend? Their own art was, it seemed, difficult enough to employ all their genius: was it reasonable to hope also to be poets or theologians? Such men had, indeed, existed; but the age of miracles and prophets was long past; nor, because they could seize the trick of an expression, or the turn of a head, had they any right to think themselves able to conceive heroes with Homer, or gods with Michael Angelo."

9. Such was, in the main, their feeling: wise, modest, unenvious, and unambitious. Meaner men, their contemporaries or successors, raved of high art with incoherent passion; arrogated to themselves an equality with the

[1] [Of the pictures here referred to, "Puck" and "Thais," as also "Mrs. Pelham feeding Chickens," were shown at the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857. "Puck" is in the collection of Mr. G. W. Fitzwilliam. "Thais" (a portrait of Miss Emily Pott in that character, painted 1781) is at Waddesdon. "Mercury as Thief" and "Cupid as Linkboy" are in the collection of Mr. A. Henderson.]

masters of elder time, and declaimed against the degenerate tastes of a public which acknowledged not the return of the Heraclidæ.[1] But the two great—the two only painters of their age—happy in a reputation founded as deeply in the heart as in the judgment of mankind, demanded no higher function than that of soothing the domestic affections; and achieved for themselves at last an immortality not the less noble, because in their lifetime they had concerned themselves less to claim it than to bestow.

10. Yet, while we acknowledge the discretion and simple-heartedness of these men, honouring them for both: and the more when we compare their tranquil powers with the hot egotism and hollow ambition of their inferiors: we have to remember, on the other hand, that the measure they thus set to their aims was, if a just, yet a narrow one; that amiable discretion is not the highest virtue, nor to please the frivolous, the best success. There is probably some strange weakness in the painter, and some fatal error in the age, when in thinking over the examples of their greatest work, for some type of culminating loveliness or veracity, we remember no expression either of religion or heroism,[2] and instead of reverently naming a Madonna di San Sisto, can only whisper, modestly, "Mrs. Pelham feeding chickens."[3]

11. The nature of the fault, so far as it exists in the painters themselves, may perhaps best be discerned by

[1] [A passage in the first draft shows the particular painters of whom Ruskin was thinking as arrogating to themselves the rôle of the descendants of Hercules:—

> "Barry foamed over his frescoes in classic rage; West compared religious subjects with exact decorum and Raphaelesque propriety; Opie and Fuseli adorned the loftiest phases of the drama with sublime incoherence; and Haydon believed himself Phidias in the morning, and retired as Michael Angelo at night."

For similar allusions to Barry, see Vol. III. p. 649, Vol. VII. p. 231, and *Eagle's Nest*, § 63; for West, Vol. IV. p. 382, Vol. V. p. 125, Vol. X. p. 125; for Opie, Vol. XIV. p. 330; for Fuseli, Vol. V. p. 108, Vol. VII. p. 419; and for Haydon, *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 85 (below, p. 133).]

[2] [In the MS.: "we remember neither saint nor hero, neither Madonna by the cradle, nor angel by the grave."]

[3] [This picture, painted 1770–1774, is in the Earl of Yarborough's collection; for another reference to it, see *Art of England*, § 66.]

comparing them with a man who went not far beyond them in his general range of effort, but who did all his work in a wholly different temper—Hans Holbein.

The first great difference between them is of course in completeness of execution. Sir Joshua's and Gainsborough's work, at its best, is only magnificent sketching; giving indeed, in places, a perfection of result unattainable by other methods,[1] and possessing always a charm of grace and power exclusively its own; yet, in its slightness addressing itself, purposefully, to the casual glance, and common thought—eager to arrest the passer-by, but careless to detain him; or detaining him, if at all, by an unexplained enchantment, not by continuance of teaching, or development of idea. But the work of Holbein is true and thorough; accomplished, in the highest as the most literal sense, with a calm entireness of unaffected resolution, which sacrifices nothing, forgets nothing, and fears nothing.

12. In the portrait of the Hausmann George Gyzen,* every accessory is perfect with a fine perfection: the carnations in the glass vase by his side—the ball of gold, chased with blue enamel, suspended on the wall—the books—the steelyard—the papers on the table, the seal-ring, with its quartered bearings,—all intensely there, and there in beauty of which no one could have dreamed that even flowers or gold were capable, far less parchment or steel. But every change of shade is felt, every rich and rubied line of petal followed; every subdued gleam in the soft blue of the enamel and bending of the gold touched with a hand whose patience of regard creates rather than paints. The jewel itself was not so precious as the rays of enduring light which form it, and flash from it, beneath that errorless hand. The man himself, what he was—not more; but to

* Museum of Berlin.[2]

[1] [Compare, on the subject of sketchiness in this connexion, Vol. III. p. 120, Vol. V. p. 186, and Vol. VII. p. 237.]

[2] [For Ruskin's note of 1859 on this picture (here reproduced), see Vol. VII. p. 490. It was painted in 1532, and is a portrait of Georg Gisze, a merchant of the steelyard (Plate II.).]

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Portrait of Georg Gisze

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all conceivable proof of sight—in all aspect of life or thought—not less. He sits alone in his accustomed room, his common work laid out before him; he is conscious of no presence, assumes no dignity, bears no sudden or superficial look of care or interest, lives only as he lived—but for ever.

18. The time occupied in painting this portrait was probably twenty times greater than Sir Joshua ever spent on a single picture, however large. The result is, to the general spectator, less attractive. In some qualities of force and grace it is absolutely inferior. But it is inexhaustible. Every detail of it wins, retains, rewards the attention with a continually increasing sense of wonderfulness. It is also wholly true. So far as it reaches, it contains the absolute facts of colour, form, and character, rendered with an unaccusable faithfulness. There is no question respecting things which it is best worth while to know, or things which it is unnecessary to state, or which might be overlooked with advantage. What of this man and his house were visible to Holbein, are visible to us: we may despise if we will; deny or doubt, we shall not; if we care to know anything concerning them, great or small, so much as may by the eye be known is for ever knowable, reliable, indisputable.

14. Respecting the advantage, or the contrary, of so great earnestness in drawing a portrait of an uncelebrated person, we raise at present no debate: I only wish the reader to note this quality of earnestness, as entirely separating Holbein from Sir Joshua,—raising him into another sphere of intellect. For here is no question of mere difference in style or in power, none of minuteness or largeness. It is a question of Entireness. Holbein is *complete* in intellect: what he sees, he sees with his whole soul: what he paints, he paints with his whole might. Sir Joshua sees partially, slightly, tenderly—catches the flying lights of things, the momentary glooms: paints also partially, tenderly, never with half his strength; content

with uncertain visions, insecure delights; the truth not precious nor significant to him, only pleasing; falsehood also pleasurable, even useful on occasion—must, however, be discreetly touched, just enough to make all men noble, all women lovely: "we do not need this flattery often, most of those we know being such; and it is a pleasant world, and with diligence—for nothing can be done without diligence—every day till four" (says Sir Joshua)—"a painter's is a happy life."[1]

Yes: and the Isis, with her swans, and shadows of Windsor Forest, is a sweet stream, touching her shores softly. The Rhine at Basle is of another temper, stern and deep, as strong, however bright its face: winding far through the solemn plain, beneath the slopes of Jura, tufted and steep: sweeping away into its regardless calm of current the waves of that little brook of St. Jakob, that bathe the Swiss Thermopylæ;* the low village nestling beneath a little bank of sloping fields—its spire seen white against the deep blue shadows of the Jura pines.

15. Gazing on that scene day by day, Holbein went his own way, with the earnestness and silent swell of the strong river—not unconscious of the awe, nor of the sanctities of his life. The snows of the eternal Alps giving forth their strength to it; the blood of the St. Jakob brook poured into it as it passes by—not in vain. He also could feel his strength coming from white snows far off in heaven.[2] He also bore upon him the purple stain

* Of 1,200 Swiss, who fought by that brookside, ten only returned. The battle checked the attack of the French, led by Louis XI. (then Dauphin) in 1444; and was the first of the great series of efforts and victories which were closed at Nancy by the death of Charles of Burgundy.

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[1] [For references to Reynolds's inculcation of diligence, see *Lectures on Art*, §§ 48, 126, 145.]

[2] [As an illustration of Ruskin's care in revising, the first draft of this passage is subjoined:—

"He also could recognise his strength coming from white sanctity far off in heaven. He also bore with him the purple stain of the earth sorrow. A grave man, knowing the motions that keep truest time to the music of Death. Gravely befriended also, drawing the meditative

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Holbein. Photo. Hanfstaengl

The Meyer Madonna

of the earth sorrow. A grave man, knowing what steps of men keep truest time to the chanting of Death. Having grave friends also;—the same singing heard far off, it seems to me, or, perhaps, even low in the room, by that family of Sir Thomas More;[1] or mingling with the hum of bees in the meadows outside the towered wall of Basle; or making the words of the book more tuneable, which meditative Erasmus looks upon.[2] Nay, that same soft Death-music is on the lips even of Holbein's Madonna, who, among many, is the Virgin you had best compare with the one before whose image we have stood so long.

Holbein's is at Dresden, companioned by the Madonna di San Sisto; but both are visible enough to you here, for, by a strange coincidence, they are (at least so far as I know) the only two great pictures in the world which have been faultlessly engraved.

16. The received tradition respecting the Holbein Madonna is beautiful;[3] and I believe the interpretation to be true. A father and mother have prayed to her for the life of their sick child. She appears to them, her own Christ

Erasmus profile often enough;—the same music being heard far off, it seems to me; murmur of it even, perhaps, low in the room by that family of Sir Thomas More; or mingling with the hum of bees in the orchards there outside the wall of Basle; making the words more tuneable in this book for Erasmus."]

[1] [A pen-and-ink sketch, in which we see More surrounded by all the members of his family, is now in the gallery of Basle (No. 111); it was given by the artist to Erasmus in 1528; the original picture, made from the sketch, is not known.]

[2] [Ruskin may refer to the portrait in the Basle Museum, or to the similar one in the Louvre: for other references to it, see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 177, and *Præterita*, i. § 229.]

[3] [It is now generally believed that the Dresden picture is a later Dutch copy of the original by Holbein at Darmstadt. Doubt was first thrown on the authenticity of the Dresden picture a few years after Ruskin wrote this paper (see R. N. Wornum's *Epochs of Painting*, 1864, p. 493 *n.*). The official catalogue of the Dresden Gallery published in 1833 stated that "the Madonna holds in her arms an apparently deceased child of the family." The interpretation given by Ruskin was also in part given by Mrs. Jameson: see her *Legends of the Madonna*, 1852, p. 111. The meaning of the picture and the question which version is the authentic one are fully discussed in a monograph written by R. N. Wornum for the Arundel Society in 1871 (*Hans Holbein and the Meier Madonna*), where also particulars are given of Jacob Meier, Burgomaster of Basle, for whom the picture was painted. Our Plate (III.) is from the Dresden picture, as that is the one described by Ruskin: for another reference to it, see *Lectures on Art*, § 55.]

in her arms. She puts down her Christ beside them—takes their child into her arms instead. It lies down upon her bosom, and stretches its hand to its father and mother, saying farewell.

This interpretation of the picture has been doubted, as nearly all the most precious truths of pictures have been doubted, and forgotten. But, even supposing it erroneous, the design is not less characteristic of Holbein. For that there are signs of suffering on the features of the child in the arms of the Virgin, is beyond question; and if this child be intended for the Christ,[1] it would not be doubtful to my mind, that, of the two—Raphael and Holbein—the latter had given the truest aspect and deepest reading of the early life of the Redeemer. Raphael sought to express His power only; but Holbein His labour and sorrow.

17. There are two other pictures which you should remember together with this (attributed, indeed, but with no semblance of probability, to the elder Holbein, none of whose work, preserved at Basle, or elsewhere, approaches in the slightest degree to their power), the St. Barbara and St. Elizabeth.* I do not know among the pictures of the great sacred schools any at once so powerful, so simple, so pathetically expressive of the need of the heart that conceived them. Not ascetic, nor quaint, nor feverishly or fondly passionate, nor wrapt in withdrawn solemnities of

* Pinacothek of Munich.[2]

[1] [The theory in that case being that the child on the ground is the sick child, whose sickness the infant Christ has taken on himself, with allusion to Isaiah liii. 6—"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."]

[2] [Plate IV. The "St. Barbara" (No. 210 in the Munich Gallery) is the left wing, and the "St. Elizabeth of Hungary" (No. 211) the right wing of a central picture of "St. Sebastian" (No. 209). The date of the picture is 1515, and Ruskin's conjecture that it is the work of the younger Holbein, is now partly accepted in the official catalogue of the Gallery, where it is suggested that, though the work was undoubtedly ordered from the father, the son may have been responsible for much of the execution (see *Catalogue of the Paintings in the Old Pinakothek, Munich, with Historical Introduction by Franz V. Reber*, Illustrated Edition, p. 45). The "St. Elizabeth" is discussed by Ruskin in *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 164, 167, 256.]

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Holbein

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Saint Barbara and Saint Elizabeth

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thought. Only entirely true — entirely pure. No depth of glowing heaven beyond them — but the clear sharp sweetness of the northern air: no splendour of rich colour, striving to adorn them with better brightness than of the day: a grey glory, as of moonlight without mist, dwelling on face and fold of dress;—all faultless-fair. Creatures they are, humble by nature, not by self-condemnation; merciful by habit, not by tearful impulse; lofty without consciousness; gentle without weakness; wholly in this present world, doing its work calmly; beautiful with all that holiest life can reach—yet already freed from all that holiest death can cast away.

A grave man, knowing what steps of men keep truest ~~the motions that keep~~ time to the Music of Death. Gravely friended also. ~~Knowing the meditation Erasmus profile often enough in its~~ The same ~~that~~ music being heard far off it seems to me, ~~in the wo~~ or perhaps even a low, in the room; ~~so~~ by that family of Sir Thomas More and mingling with him of bees ~~intends the~~ ~~Murmur of it even~~ and making the words more tuneable in the book which meditation Erasmus ~~reads~~ looks upon in the orchards then, outside the walls of Bach & Nay - the ~~sound~~ sweetness of the sweet hymn ~~that music~~ is on the lips even of Holbein's Madonna.

For among many, is the Virgin ~~that is the one~~ you had best compare with ~~this~~ her we have been standing before so long.

~~There are two two~~ The received ~~interp~~ tradition about ~~this~~ the Holbein her Madonna ~~picture~~ is beautiful; and I believe its the interpretation is true. A father and mother have prayed to her for the life of their sick child. She appears to them: her Christ in her arms. She sets down her Christ beside them. Takes their child into her arms instead. He lies down at once ~~back~~ on

her bosom, and stretches his hand to them — saying farewell.

This meaning ~~of the picture~~ has been ~~lately~~ disputed — ~~lately with~~ as nearly all the best truths about pictures have been disputed. ~~My chief reason for believing the received tradition to be right is that I do not think the child on the ground would~~ But even supposing it an error, the ~~picture~~ design is not less characteristic of Holbein. For that there is an sense of suffering in the force of the child in the arms of the ~~Madonna~~ Virgin, there can be no question and if this child be intended for the Christ — it would not to my mind ~~then Holbein alone among painters, has supposed~~ be doubtful that of the two, Holbein & Raphael, the former had given the truth & deepest reach aspect of the early life of the Redeemer. Raphael sought to express ~~in this~~ only his power — but Holbein his sorrow.

The picture is at Dresden. companioned by the Madonna de San Sisto but both, ~~and~~ — so far as I know — they are the only two pictures in the world which have ever been entirely well, and faithfully, & adequately engraved. are visible enough to you here, for

A PAGE OF THE MS. OF "SIR JOSHUA AND HOLBEIN" (§§ 15, 16)

II

THE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURE

(1865)

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This paper was read by Ruskin at the ordinary meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects on May 15, 1865, and was afterwards published in the *Sessional Papers* of the Institute, 1864–1865. Part iii., No. 2, pp. 139–147. Its full title (as there appears) was "An Inquiry into some of the Conditions at present affecting the Study of Architecture in our Schools."

The paper was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 371–400 (§§ 274–291); and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. i. pp. 376–403 (§§ 274–291).

In this edition a misprint of "Thurii" for "Thurium" has been corrected in § 3, and two misprints have been corrected in the quotation from Dante (§ 8), "pittura" for "pintura" and "et" for "ed."]

THE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURE IN OUR SCHOOLS

1. I SUPPOSE there is no man who, permitted to address, for the first time, the Institute of British Architects, would not feel himself abashed and restrained, doubtful of his claim to be heard by them, even if he attempted only to describe what had come under his personal observation; much more if on the occasion he thought it would be expected of him to touch upon any of the general principles of the art of architecture before its principal English masters.

But if any more than another should feel thus abashed, it is certainly one who has first to ask their pardon for the petulance of boyish expressions of partial thought; for ungraceful advocacy of principles which needed no support from him, and discourteous blame of work of which he had never felt the difficulty.

2. Yet, when I ask this pardon, gentlemen—and I do it sincerely and in shame—it is not as desiring to retract anything in the general tenor and scope of what I have hitherto tried to say. Permit me the pain, and the apparent impertinence, of speaking for a moment of my own past work; for it is necessary that what I am about to submit to you to-night should be spoken in no disadvantageous connection with that; and yet understood as spoken, in no discordance of purpose with that. Indeed there is much in old work of mine which I could wish to put out of mind. Reasonings, perhaps not in themselves false, but founded on insufficient data and imperfect experience—eager preferences, and dislikes, dependent on chance circumstances of association, and limitations of sphere

of labour: but, while I would fain now, if I could, modify the applications, and chasten the extravagance of my writings, let me also say of them that they were the expression of a delight in the art of architecture which was too intense to be vitally deceived, and of an inquiry too honest and eager to be without some useful result; and I only wish I had now time, and strength and power of mind, to carry on, more worthily, the main endeavour of my early work. That main endeavour has been throughout to set forth the life of the individual human spirit as modifying the application of the formal laws of architecture, no less than of all other arts;[1] and to show that the power and advance of this art, even in conditions of formal nobleness, were dependent on its just association with sculpture as a means of expressing the beauty of natural forms:[2] and I the more boldly ask your permission to insist somewhat on this main meaning of my past work, because there are many buildings now rising in the streets of London, as in other cities of England, which appear to be designed in accordance with this principle, and which are, I believe, more offensive to all who thoughtfully concur with me in accepting the principle of Naturalism than they are to the classical architect to whose modes of design they are visibly antagonistic. These buildings, in which the mere cast of a flower, or the realization of a vulgar face, carved without pleasure by a workman who is only endeavouring to attract attention by novelty, and then fastened on, or appearing to be fastened, as chance may dictate, to an arch, or a pillar, or a wall, hold such relation to nobly naturalistic architecture as common sign-painters' furniture landscapes do to painting, or commonest wax-work to Greek sculpture; and the feelings with which true naturalists regard such buildings of this class are, as nearly as might be, what a painter would experience, if, having contended earnestly against

[1] [On this point, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. pp. xvii., 201).]

[2] [Here see *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Vol. VIII. pp. 170, 174; *Academy Notes*, 1857 (Vol. XIV. p. 118); and *Two Paths*, §§ 115, 123 (Vol. XVI. pp. 357, 361).]

conventional schools, and having asserted that Greek vase-painting and Egyptian wall-painting, and Mediæval glass-painting, though beautiful, all, in their place and way, were yet subordinate arts, and culminated only in perfectly naturalistic work such as Raphael's in fresco, and Titian's on canvas;—if, I say, a painter, fixed in such faith in an entire, intellectual and manly truth, and maintaining that an Egyptian profile of a head, however decoratively applicable, was only noble for such human truth as it contained, and was imperfect and ignoble beside a work of Titian's, were shown, by his antagonist, the coloured daguerreotype of a human body in its nakedness, and told that it was art such as that which he really advocated, and to such art that his principles, if carried out, would finally lead.

8. And because this question lies at the very root of the organization of the system of instruction for our youth, I venture boldly to express the surprise and regret with which I see our schools still agitated by assertions of the opposition of Naturalism to Invention, and to the higher conditions of art. Even in this very room I believe there has lately been question[1] whether a sculptor should look at a real living creature of which he had to carve the image. I would answer in one sense,—no; that is to say, he ought to carve no living creature while he still needs to look at it. If we do not know what a human body is like, we certainly had better look, and look often, at it, before we carve it; but if we already know the human likeness so well that we can carve it by light of memory, we shall not need to ask whether we ought now to look at it or not; and what is true of man is true of all other creatures and organisms—of bird, and beast, and leaf. No assertion is more at variance with the laws of classical as well as of subsequent art than the common one that species should not be distinguished in great design.[2] We might as well say that we ought to carve a man so as

[1] [The discussion is not reported in the *Sessional Proceedings*.]
[2] [For a discussion of this assertion in the case of painting, see Vol. III. p. 150.]

not to know him from an ape, as that we should carve a lily so as not to know it from a thistle. It is difficult for me to conceive how this can be asserted in the presence of any remains either of great Greek or Italian art. A Greek looked at a cockle-shell or a cuttlefish as carefully as he looked at an Olympic conqueror. The eagle of Elis, the lion of Velia, the horse of Syracuse, the bull of Thurium, the dolphin of Tarentum, the crab of Agrigentum, and the crawfish of Catana, are studied as closely, every one of them, as the Juno of Argos, or Apollo of Clazomenæ.[1] Idealism, so far from being contrary to special truth, is the very abstraction of speciality from everything else. It is the earnest statement of the characters which make man man, and cockle cockle, and flesh flesh, and fish fish. Feeble thinkers, indeed, always suppose that distinction of kind involves meanness of style; but the meanness is in the treatment, not in the distinction. There is a noble way of carving a man, and a mean one; and there is a noble way of carving a beetle, and a mean one; and a great sculptor carves his scarabaeus grandly, as he carves his king, while a mean sculptor makes vermin of both. And it is a sorrowful truth, yet a sublime one, that this greatness of treatment cannot be taught by talking about it. No, nor even by enforced imitative practice of it. Men treat their subjects nobly only when they themselves become noble; not till then.[2] And that elevation of their own nature is assuredly not to be effected by a course

[1] [For the eagle of Elis, see III. B. 33 in the exhibition of electrotypes at the British Museum (Plate 23 in the *Guide to the Principal Coins of the Ancients*). For the lion of Velia, IV. C. 24 (Plate 34). Examples of the horse of Syracuse are given on Plate XXIII. in *Aratra Pentelici* (Vol. XX.). For the bull of Thurium, see Plate XXII. in the same. The dolphin of Tarentum may be seen on III. C. 7–10 in the British Museum (Plate 24), and see Plate XVIII. here (below, p. 410). For another reference to the coins of Tarentum, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 18 (below, p. 68, and *Val d'Arno*, § 171). For the crab of Agrigentum, see II. C. 14 in the British Museum (Plate 16). For the crawfish of Catana, behind a head of Apollo, see the coin illustrated in Plate VI. (Fig. 16) of Percy Gardner's *Types of Greek Coins* (1883). A head of Juno of Argos is shown on Plate XVIII. here; and another, on Plate XV. in *Aratra Pentelici*. For the Apollo of Clazomenæ, see *ibid.*, Plate X. For other references to these coins, see *Ethics of the Dust*, § 107 (Vol. XVIII. p. 343 *n.*), and *Queen of the Air*, § 167 (below, p. 413).]

[2] [Compare *Two Paths*, § 66 (Vol. XVI. p. 310).]

of drawing from models, however well chosen, or of listening to lectures, however well intended.

Art, national or individual, is the result of a long course of previous life and training; a necessary result, if that life has been loyal, and an impossible one, if it has been base. Let a nation be healthful, happy, pure in its enjoyments, brave in its acts, and broad in its affections, and its art will spring round and within it as freely as the foam from a fountain; but let the springs of its life be impure, and its course polluted, and you will not get the bright spray by treatises on the mathematical structure of bubbles.

4. And I am to-night the more restrained in addressing you, because, gentlemen—I tell you honestly—I am weary of all writing and speaking about art,[1] and most of my own. No good is to be reached that way. The last fifty years have, in every civilized country of Europe, produced more brilliant thought, and more subtle reasoning about art than the five thousand before them, and what has it all come to? Do not let it be thought that I am insensible to the high merits of much of our modern work. It cannot be for a moment supposed that in speaking of the inefficient expression of the doctrines which writers on art have tried to enforce, I was thinking of such Gothic as has been designed and built by Mr. Scott, Mr. Butterfield, Mr. Street, Mr. Waterhouse, Mr. Godwin, or my dead friend, Mr. Woodward.[2] Their work has been original and independent. So far as it is good, it has been founded on principles learned not from books, but by study of the monuments of the great schools, developed by national grandeur, not by philosophical speculation. But I am entirely assured that those who have done best among us

[1] [Compare Ruskin's subsequent remarks; below, pp. 38, 215.]

[2] [For other (and sometimes less complimentary) references to the work of Sir Gilbert Scott, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 79 *n.*); *Academy Notes*, 1857 (Vol. XIV. p. 118); *Præterita*, ii. § 153; *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 11; and General Index. For references to G. E. Street, see Vol. XVI. pp. 127 *n.*, 461. For a high appreciation of a building by Mr. Waterhouse, see Vol. XVIII. p. lxxv.; and for Woodward, Vol. XVI. pp. xliii. *seq.*, and Vol. XVIII. p. 150.]

are the least satisfied with what they have done, and will admit a sorrowful concurrence in my belief that the spirit, or rather, I should say, the dispirit, of the age, is heavily against them; that all the ingenious writing or thinking which is so rife amongst us has failed to educate a public capable of taking true pleasure in any kind of art, and that the best designers never satisfy their own requirements of themselves, unless by vainly addressing another temper of mind, and providing for another manner of life, than ours. All lovely architecture was designed for cities in cloudless air; for cities in which piazzas and gardens opened in bright populousness and peace;[1] cities built that men might live happily in them, and take delight daily in each other's presence and powers. But our cities, built in black air which, by its accumulated foulness, first renders all ornament invisible in distance, and then chokes its interstices with soot; cities which are mere crowded masses of store, and warehouse, and counter, and are therefore to the rest of the world what the larder and cellar are to a private house; cities in which the object of men is not life, but labour; and in which all chief magnitude of edifice is to enclose machinery; cities in which the streets are not the avenues for the passing and procession of a happy people, but the drains for the discharge of a tormented mob, in which the only object in reaching any spot is to be transferred to another; in which existence becomes mere transition, and every creature is only one atom in a drift of human dust, and current of interchanging particles, circulating here by tunnels underground, and there by tubes in the air;[2] for a city, or cities, such as this no architecture is possible—nay, no desire of it is possible to their inhabitants.

5. One of the most singular proofs of the vanity of all hope that conditions of art may be combined with the occupations of such a city, has been given lately in the

[1] [See in this connexion the descriptions of Verona in *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (Vol. XII. pp. 14–15) and *A Joy for Ever* (Vol. XVI. pp. 66–67).]

[2] [The reference is presumably to the tubular bridge over the Menai Straits, mentioned in *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 456).]

design of the new iron bridge over the Thames at Blackfriars.[1] Distinct attempt has been there made to obtain architectural effect on a grand scale. Nor was there anything in the nature of the work to prevent such an effort being successful. It is not edifices, being of iron, or of glass, or thrown into new forms, demanded by new purposes, which need hinder its being beautiful.[2] But it is the absence of all desire of beauty, of all joy in fancy, and of all freedom in thought. If a Greek, or Egyptian, or Gothic architect had been required to design such a bridge, he would have looked instantly at the main conditions of its structure, and dwelt on them with the delight of imagination. He would have seen that the main thing to be done was to hold a horizontal group of iron rods steadily and straight over stone piers. Then he would have said to himself (or felt without saying), "It is this holding,—this grasp,—this securing tenor of a thing which might be shaken, so that it cannot be shaken, on which I have to insist." And he would have put some life into those iron tenons. As a Greek put human life into his pillars and produced the caryatid; and an Egyptian, lotus life into his pillars and produced the lily capital: so here, either of them would have put some gigantic or some angelic life into those colossal sockets. He would perhaps have put vast winged statues of bronze, folding their wings, and grasping the iron rails with their hands; or monstrous eagles, or serpents holding with claw or coil, or strong four-footed animals couchant, holding with the paw, or in fierce action, holding with teeth. Thousands of grotesque or of lovely thoughts would have risen before him, and the bronze forms, animal or human, would have signified, either in symbol or in legend, whatever might be gracefully told respecting the purposes of the work and the

[1] [Ruskin's description in the following passage is of the original railway bridge to Ludgate Hill Station. In later years a second iron bridge (of different and worse design) was constructed, almost touching the first bridge, to carry additional traffic. The two railway bridges are rendered less conspicuous by the road bridge at Blackfriars, to the west of them, opened in 1869.]

[2] [Compare the discussion of this subject in *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. pp. 455–456).]

districts to which it conducted. Whereas, now, the entire invention of the designer seems to have exhausted itself in exaggerating to an enormous size a weak form of iron nut, and in conveying the information upon it, in large letters, that it belongs to the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company. I believe then, gentlemen, that if there were any life in the national mind in such respects, it would be shown in these its most energetic and costly works. But that there is no such life, nothing but a galvanic restlessness and covetousness, with which it is for the present vain to strive; and in the midst of which, tormented at once by its activities and its apathies, having their work continually thrust aside and dishonoured, always seen to disadvantage, and overtopped by huge masses, discordant and destructive, even the best architects must be unable to do justice to their own powers.

6. But, gentlemen, while thus the mechanisms of the age prevent even the wisest and best of its artists from producing entirely good work, may we not reflect with consternation what a marvellous ability the luxury of the age, and the very advantages of education, confer on the unwise and ignoble for the production of attractively and infectiously *bad* work? I do not think that this adverse influence, necessarily affecting all conditions of so-called civilization, has been ever enough considered. It is impossible to calculate the power of the false workman in an advanced period of national life, nor the temptation to all workmen, to *become* false.

7. First, there is the irresistible appeal to vanity. There is hardly any temptation of the kind (there cannot be) while the arts are in progress. The best men must then always be ashamed of themselves; they never can be satisfied with their work absolutely, but only as it is progressive. Take, for instance, any archaic head intended to be beautiful; say, the Attic Athena, or the early Arethusa of Syracuse.[1] In that, and in all archaic work

[1] [For the archaic Athena on an Athenian coin, see Fig. 4 in *Aratra Pentelici* (§ 80); and for the early Arethusa of Syracuse, *ibid.*, Plate II.]

of promise, there is much that is inefficient, much that to us appears ridiculous—but nothing sensual, nothing vain, nothing spurious or imitative. It is a child's work, a childish nation's work, but not a fool's work. You find in children the same tolerance of ugliness, the same eager and innocent delight in their own work for the moment, however feeble; but next day it is thrown aside, and something better is done. Now, in this careless play, a child or a childish nation differs inherently from a foolish educated person, or a nation advanced in pseudo-civilization. The educated person has seen all kinds of beautiful things, of which he would fain do the like—not to add to their number—but for his own vanity, that he also may be called an artist. Here is at once a singular and fatal difference. The childish nation sees nothing in its own past work to satisfy itself. It is pleased at having done this, but wants something better; it is struggling forward always to reach this better, this ideal conception. It wants more beauty to look at, it wants more subject to feel. It calls out to all its artists—stretching its hands to them as a little child does—"Oh, if you would but tell me another story,"—"Oh, if I might but have a doll with bluer eyes." That's the right temper to work in, and to get work done for you in. But the vain, aged, highly-educated nation is satiated with beautiful things—it has myriads more than it can look at; it has fallen into a habit of inattention; it passes weary and jaded through galleries which contain the best fruit of a thousand years of human travail; it gapes and shrugs over them, and pushes its way past them to the door.

8. But there is one feeling that is always distinct; however jaded and languid we may be in all other pleasures, we are never languid in vanity, and we would still paint and carve for fame. What other motive have the nations of Europe to-day? If they wanted art for art's sake they would take care of what they have already got. But at this instant the two noblest pictures in Venice are lying

rolled up in outhouses,[1] and the noblest portrait of Titian in existence is hung forty feet from the ground. We have absolutely no motive but vanity and the love of money—no others, as nations, than these, whatever we may have as individuals. And as the thirst of vanity thus increases, so the temptation to it. There was no fame of artists in these archaic days. Every year, every hour, saw some one rise to surpass what had been done before. And there was always better work to be done, but never any credit to be got by it. The artist lived in an atmosphere of perpetual, wholesome, inevitable eclipse. Do as well as you choose to-day,—make the whole Borgo dance with delight,[2] they would dance to a better man's pipe to-morrow. *Credette Cimabue nella pintura tener lo campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido.* This was the fate, the necessary fate, even of the strongest. They could only hope to be remembered as links in an endless chain. For the weaker men it was no use even to put their name on their works. They did not. If they could not work for joy and for love, and take their part simply in the choir of human toil, they might throw up their tools. But now it is far otherwise—now, the best having been done — and for a couple of hundred years, the best of us being confessed to have come short of it, everybody thinks that he may be the great man once again, and this is certain, that whatever in art is done for display, is invariably wrong.

9. But, secondly, consider the attractive power of false art, completed, as compared with imperfect art advancing to completion. Archaic work, so far as faultful, is repulsive, but advanced work is, in all its faults, attractive.

[1] [Ruskin considered the noblest picture in Venice to be the "Paradise" of Tintoret in the Ducal Palace; but he refers here to some of the pictures by Tintoret in the Scuola di San Rocco (see *The Crown of Wild Olive*, § 87, Vol. XVIII. p. 460). See also *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 100; below, p. 145. "The noblest portrait of Titian" is probably the "Charles V." at Munich; Ruskin notices its being hung too high in Vol. VII. p. 495, and again in *The Cestus of Aglaia*, § 4 (below, p. 56).]

[2] [For the allusion to the Borgo Allegro, so called in consequence of the procession with Cimabue's picture, see Vol. III. p. 644, and Vol. XII. p. 98; and for the subsequent eclipse of Cimabue's fame by Giotto, see Vol. IV. p. 202 *n.* Ruskin again quotes the passage from Dante (*Purg.* xi. 94, 95)—"Cimabue thought to lord it over painting's field, and now the cry is Giotto's"—in *Mornings in Florence*, § 37.]

The moment that art has reached the point at which it becomes sensitively and delicately imitative, it appeals to a new audience. From that instant it addresses the sensualist and the idler. Its deceptions, its successes, its subtleties, become interesting to every condition of folly, of frivolity, and of vice. And this new audience brings to bear upon the art in which its foolish and wicked interest has been unhappily awakened, the full power of its riches: the largest bribes of gold as well as of praise are offered to the artist who will betray his art, until at last, from the sculpture of Phidias and fresco of Luini, it sinks into the cabinet ivory and the picture kept under lock and key. Between these highest and lowest types, there is a vast mass of merely imitative and delicately sensual sculpture; —veiled nymphs—chained slaves—soft goddesses seen by roselight through suspended curtains—drawing-room portraits and domesticities, and such like, in which the interest is either merely personal and selfish, or dramatic and sensational; in either case, destructive of the power of the public to sympathize with the aims of great architects.

10. Gentlemen,—I am no Puritan, and have never praised or advocated Puritanical art. The two pictures which I would last part with out of our National Gallery, if there were question of parting with any, would be Titian's Bacchus and Correggio's Venus.[1] But the noble naturalism of these was the fruit of ages of previous courage, continence, and religion—it was the fulness of passion in the life of a Britomart.[2] But the mid-age and old age of nations is not like the mid-age or old age of noble women. National decrepitude must be criminal. National death can only be by disease, and yet it is almost impossible, out of the history of the art of nations, to elicit the true conditions

[1] [For other references to Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne," No. 35, see Vol. III. pp. 29, 33, 268; Vol. V. p. 167; Vol. VII. p. 117; and Vol. XII. p. 400. For "Correggio's Venus" ("The Education of Cupid," No. 10), see *Queen of the Air*, § 163 (below, p. 411); *Seven Lamps* (Vol. VIII. pp. 181–182); *The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*; and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 94.]

[2] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 62, and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 119 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 118, 482).]

also some strength of religion, than comfort ourselves with colour of reason for the desolation of godlessness. I would say to every youth who entered our schools—Be a Mahometan, a Diana-worshipper, a Fire-worshipper, Root-worshipper, if you will; but at least be so much a man as to know what worship means. I had rather, a million-fold rather, see you one of those "quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis numina,"[1] than one of those "quibus hæc *non* nascuntur in cordibus lumina"; and who are, by everlasting orphanage, divided from the Father of Spirits, who is also the Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift.[2]

18. "So much of man," I say, feeling profoundly that all right exercise of any human gift, so descended from the Giver of good, depends on the primary formation of the character of true manliness in the youth—that is to say, of a majestic, grave, and deliberate strength. How strange the words sound; how little does it seem possible to conceive of majesty, and gravity, and deliberation in the daily track of modern life. Yet, gentlemen, we need not hope that our work will be majestic if there is no majesty in ourselves. The word "manly" has come to mean practically, among us, a schoolboy's character, not a man's. We are, at our best, thoughtlessly impetuous, fond of adventure and excitement; curious in knowledge for its novelty, not for its system and results; faithful and affectionate to those among whom we are by chance cast, but gently and calmly insolent to strangers: we are stupidly conscientious, and instinctively brave, and always ready to cast away the lives we take no pains to make valuable, in causes of which we have never ascertained the justice. This is our highest type—notable peculiarly among nations for its gentleness, together with its courage; but in lower conditions it is especially liable to degradation by its love of jest and of vulgar sensation. It is against this fatal

[1] [See Juvenal, xv. 10 (speaking of Egypt, where the leek and onion were sacred): "O sanctas gentes quibus," etc.]

[2] [James i. 17.]

tendency to vile play that we have chiefly to contend. It is the spirit of Milton's *Comus;* bestial itself, but having power to arrest and paralyze all who come within its influence, even pure creatures sitting helpless, mocked by it on their marble thrones. It is incompatible, not only with all greatness of character, but with all true gladness of heart, and it develops itself in nations in proportion to their degradation, connected with a peculiar gloom and a singular tendency to play with death, which is a morbid reaction from the morbid excess.

14. A book has lately been published on the Mythology of the Rhine, with illustrations by Gustave Doré.[1] The Rhine god is represented in the vignette title-page with a pipe in one hand and a pot of beer in the other. You cannot have a more complete type of the tendency which is chiefly to be dreaded in this age than in this conception, as opposed to any possibility of representation of a river-god, however playful, in the mind of a Greek painter. The example is the more notable because Gustave Doré's is not a common mind, and, if born in any other epoch, he would probably have done valuable (though never first-rate) work; but by glancing (it will be impossible for you to do more than glance) at his illustrations of Balzac's *Contes Drôlatiques,*[2] you will see further how this "drôlatique," or semi-comic mask is, in the truth of it, the mask of a skull, and how the tendency to burlesque jest is both in France and England only an effervescence from the *cloaca maxima* of the putrid instincts which fasten themselves on national sin, and are in the midst of the luxury of European capitals, what Dante meant when he wrote "quel mi sveglio col puzzo," of the body of the Wealth-Siren;[3] the mocking levity and mocking gloom being equally signs of the death of the soul; just as, contrariwise, a passionate seriousness

[1] [Saintine, X. B.: *La Mythologie du Rhin, Illustrée par Gustave Doré,* 1862.]

[2] [See, for a further discussion of these illustrations, *Time and Tide,* § 30 (Vol. XVII. pp. 344–345).]

[3] [*Purgatorio,* xix. 33. On the Wealth-Siren, see *Munera Pulveris,* § 90 (Vol. XVII. pp. 211–212).]

and passionate joyfulness are signs of its full life in works such as those of Angelico, Luini, Ghiberti, or La Robbia.

It is to recover this stern seriousness, this pure and thrilling joy, together with perpetual sense of spiritual presence, that all true education of youth must now be directed. This seriousness, this passion, this universal human religion, are the first principles, the true roots of all art, as they are of all doing, of all being. Get this *vis viva*[1] first and all great work will follow. Lose it, and your schools of art will stand among other living schools as the frozen corpses stand by the winding stair of the St. Michael's Convent of Mont Cenis,[2] holding their hands stretched out under their shrouds, as if beseeching the passer-by to look upon the wasting of their death.

15. And all the higher branches of technical teaching are vain without this; nay, are in some sort vain altogether, for they are superseded by this. You may teach imitation, because the meanest man can imitate; but you can neither teach idealism nor composition, because only a great man can choose, conceive, or compose; and he does all these necessarily, and because of his nature.[3] His greatness is in his choice of things, in his analysis of them, and his combining powers involve the totality of his knowledge in life. His methods of observation and abstraction are essential habits of his thought, conditions of his being. If he looks at a human form he recognizes the signs of nobility in it, and loves them—hates whatever is diseased, frightful, sinful, or *designant* of decay. All ugliness, and abortion, and fading away; all signs of vice and foulness, he turns away from, as inherently diabolic and horrible; all signs of unconquered emotion he regrets, as weaknesses. He looks only for the calm purity of the human creature, in living conquests of its passions and of fate. That is idealism; but

[1] [Compare the use of the term in *Munera Pulveris*, § 134 (Vol. XVII. p. 259).]

[2] [For another description of the desiccated corpses on the staircase of the Sagra di San Michele, see Ruskin's letter of 1858 in Vol. VII. p. xlvi.]

[3] [Compare Vol. V. p. 189, and Vol. VII. p. 210.]

you cannot teach any one else that preference. Take a man who likes to see and paint the gambler's rage; the hedge-ruffian's enjoyment; the debauched soldier's strife; the vicious woman's degradation;—take a man fed on the dusty picturesque of rags and guilt; talk to him of principles of beauty! make him draw what you will, how you will, he will leave the stain of himself on whatever he touches. You had better go lecture to a snail, and tell it to leave no slime behind it. Try to make a mean man compose; you will find nothing in his thoughts consecutive or proportioned—nothing consistent in his sight—nothing in his fancy. He cannot comprehend two things in relation at once—how much less twenty! How much less all! Everything is uppermost with him in its turn, and each as large as the rest; but Titian or Veronese compose as tranquilly as they would speak—inevitably. The thing comes to them so—they see it so—rightly, and in harmony: they will not talk to you of composition, hardly even understanding how lower people see things otherwise, but knowing that if they *do* see otherwise, there is for them the end there, talk as you will.

16. I had intended, in conclusion, gentlemen, to incur such blame of presumption as might be involved in offering some hints for present practical methods in architectural schools, but here again I am checked, as I have been throughout, by a sense of the uselessness of all minor means, and helps, without the establishment of a true and broad educational system. My wish would be to see the profession of the architect united, not with that of the engineer, but of the sculptor. I think there should be a separate school and university course for engineers, in which the principal branches of study connected with that of practical building should be the physical and exact sciences, and honours should be taken in mathematics; but I think there should be another school and university course for the sculptor and architect, in which literature and philosophy should be the associated branches of study, and honours

should be taken *in literis humanioribus;* and I think a young architect's examination for his degree (for mere pass), should be much stricter than that of youths intending to enter other professions. The quantity of scholarship necessary for the efficiency of a country clergyman is not great. So that he be modest and kindly, the main truths he has to teach may be learned better in his heart than in books, and taught in very simple English. The best physicians I have known spent very little time in their libraries; and though my lawyer sometimes chats with me over a Greek coin, I think he regards the time so spent in the light rather of concession to my idleness than as helpful to his professional labours.

But there is no task undertaken by a true architect of which the honourable fulfilment will not require a range of knowledge and habitual feeling only attainable by advanced scholarship.

17. Since, however, such expansion of system is, at present, beyond hope, the best we can do is to render the studies undertaken in our schools thoughtful, reverent, and refined, according to our power. Especially, it should be our aim to prevent the minds of the students from being distracted by models of an unworthy or mixed character. A museum is one thing—a school another; and I am persuaded that as the efficiency of a school of literature depends on the mastering a few good books,[1] so the efficiency of a school of art will depend on the understanding a few good models. And so strongly do I feel this that I would, for my own part, at once consent to sacrifice my personal predilections in art, and to vote for the exclusion of all Gothic or Mediæval models whatsoever, if by this sacrifice I could obtain also the exclusion of Byzantine, Indian, Renaissance-French, and other more or less attractive but barbarous work; and thus concentrate the mind of the student wholly upon the study of natural form, and upon

[1] [See below, p. 146.]

its treatment by the sculptors and metal workers of Greece, Ionia, Sicily, and Magna Græcia, between 500 and 350 B.C. But I should hope that exclusiveness need not be carried quite so far. I think Donatello, Mino of Fiesole, the Robbias, Ghiberti, Verrocchio, and Michael Angelo, should be adequately represented in our schools—together with the Greeks—and that a few carefully chosen examples of the floral sculpture of the North in the thirteenth century should be added,[1] with especial view to display the treatment of naturalistic ornament in subtle connection with constructive requirements; and in the course of study pursued with reference to these models, as of admitted perfection, I should endeavour first to make the student thoroughly acquainted with the natural forms and characters of the objects he had to treat, and then to exercise him in the abstraction of these forms, and the suggestion of these characters, under due sculptural limitation. He should first be taught to draw largely and simply; then he should make quick and firm sketches of flowers, animals, drapery, and figures, from nature, in the simplest terms of line, and light and shade; always being taught to look at the organic, actions and masses, not at the textures or accidental effects of shade; meantime his sentiment respecting all these things should be cultivated by close and constant inquiry into their mythological significance and associated traditions; then, knowing the things and creatures thoroughly, and regarding them through an atmosphere of enchanted memory, he should be shown how the facts he has taken so long to learn are summed by a great sculptor in a few touches; how those touches are invariably arranged in musical and decorative relations; how every detail unnecessary for his purpose is refused; how those necessary for his purpose are insisted upon, or even exaggerated, or represented by singular artifice, when literal

[1] [These are schemes for Collections of Examples and for art-teaching which Ruskin afterwards carried out at Oxford: see Vol. XX.]

representation is impossible; and how all this is done under the instinct and passion of an inner commanding spirit which it is indeed impossible to imitate, but possible, perhaps, to share.

18. Perhaps! Pardon me that I speak despondingly. For my own part, I feel the force of mechanism and the fury of avaricious commerce to be at present so irresistible, that I have seceded from the study not only of architecture, but nearly of all art; and have given myself, as I would in a besieged city, to seek the best modes of getting bread and water for its multitudes, there remaining no question, it seems, to me, of other than such grave business for the time.[1] But there is, at least, this ground for courage, if not for hope: As the evil spirits of avarice and luxury are directly contrary to art, so, also, art is directly contrary to them; and according to its force, expulsive of them and medicinal against them; so that the establishment of such schools as I have ventured to describe—whatever their immediate success or ill success in the teaching of art—would yet be the directest method of resistance to those conditions of evil among which our youth are cast at the most critical period of their lives. We may not be able to produce architecture, but, at the least, we shall resist vice. I do not know if it has been observed that while Dante rightly connects architecture, as the most permanent expression of the pride of humanity, whether just or unjust, with the first cornice of Purgatory, he indicates its noble function by engraving upon it, in perfect sculpture, the stories which rebuke the errors and purify the purposes of noblest souls.[2] In the fulfilment of such function, literally and practically, here among men, is the only real use of pride of noble architecture, and on its acceptance or surrender of that function it depends whether, in future, the cities of England melt into a ruin more confused and ghastly than ever storm wasted or wolf

[1] [See the Introduction, above, pp. xxii.–xxiii.; and compare *Time and Tide*, § 69 (Vol. XVII. p. 376).]

[2] [See *Purgatorio*, xii.]

inhabited, or purge and exalt themselves into true habitations of men, whose walls shall be Safety, and whose gates shall be Praise.[1]

NOTE.[2]—In the course of the discussion which followed this paper the meeting was addressed by Professor Donaldson, who alluded to the architectural improvements in France under the third Napoleon, by Mr. George Edmund Street, by Professor Kerr, Mr. Digby Wyatt, and others. The President then proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Ruskin, who, in acknowledging the high compliment paid him, said he would detain the meeting but a few minutes, but he felt he ought to make some attempt to explain what he had inefficiently stated in his paper; and there was hardly anything said in the discussion in which he did not concur: the supposed differences of opinion were either because he had ill-expressed himself, or because of things left unsaid. In the first place he was surprised to hear dissent from Professor Donaldson while he expressed his admiration of some of the changes which had been developed in modern architecture.[3] There were two conditions of architecture adapted for different climates; one with narrow streets, calculated for shade; another for broad avenues beneath bright skies; but both conditions had their beautiful effects. He sympathized with the admirers of Italy, and he was delighted with Genoa. He had been delighted also by the view of the long vistas from the Tuileries. Mr. Street had showed[4] that he had not sufficiently dwelt on the distinction between near and distant carving—between carving and sculpture. He (Mr. Ruskin) could allow of no distinction. Sculpture which was to be viewed at a height of 500 feet above the eye might be executed with a few touches of the chisel; opposed to that there was the exquisite finish which was the perfection of sculpture, as displayed in the Greek statues, after a full knowledge of the whole nature of the object portrayed; both styles were admirable in their true application—both were "sculpture"—perfect according to their places and requirements. The attack of Professor Kerr he regarded as in play,[5] and in that spirit he would reply to him that he was afraid a practical association with bricks and mortar would hardly produce the effects upon him which had been suggested,

[1] [Isaiah lx. 18.]

[2] [Thus printed in *On the Old Road*, which summarises the other proceedings and quotes Ruskin's speech from the *Sessional Proceedings*.]

[3] [Professor Donaldson had admired the noble avenues which the Emperor of the French was making in Paris, and this remark was greeted with cries of "No, No"; Mr. Street subsequently protested against this praise of modern Paris, and said that his favourite city, from an architectural point of view, was Genoa, "where there was only one street more than half the width of this room."]

[4] [The criticism referred to—that "they should draw the line between carving and sculpture"—was, however, made in fact by Professor Donaldson.]

[5] [Professor Kerr had argued that talk about the poetry of architecture was all very well in a writer, but that it would not do in business: "he could not help thinking that if they were to set Mr. Ruskin up as an architect in an office in Whitehall, and give him plenty of work to do, he would change his opinion." Professor Kerr asked what was the good of theorising? "Mr. Ruskin said that during the last fifty years there had been more philosophy expended upon art than in all the

for having of late in his residence[1] experienced the transition of large extents of ground into bricks and mortar, it had had no effect in changing his views; and when he said he was tired of writing upon art,[2] it was not that he was ashamed of what he had written, but that he was tired of writing in vain, and of knocking his head, thick as it might be, against a wall. There was another point which he would answer very gravely. It was referred to by Mr. Digby Wyatt, and was the one point he had mainly at heart all through—viz., that religion and high morality were at the root of all great art in all great times. The instances referred to by Mr. Digby Wyatt did not counteract that proposition.[3] Modern and ancient forms of life might be different, nor could all men be judged by formal canons, but a true human heart was in the breast of every really great artist. He had the greatest detestation of anything approaching to cant in respect of art; but, after long investigation of the historical evidence, as well as of the metaphysical laws bearing on this question, he was absolutely certain that a high moral and religious training was the only way to get good fruits from our youth; make them good men first, and only so, if at all, they would become good artists. With regard to the points mooted respecting the practical and poetical uses of architecture, he thought they did not sufficiently define their terms; they spoke of poetry as rhyme. He thanked the President for his definition to-night,[4] and he was sure he would concur with him that poetry meant as its derivation implied—"the *doing*."[5] What was rightly done was done for ever, and that which was only a crude work for the time was not poetry; poetry was only that which would recreate or remake the human soul. In that sense poetical architecture was separated from all utilitarian work. He had said long ago[6] men could not decorate their shops and counters; they could decorate only where they lived in peace and rest—where they existed to be happy. There ornament would find use, and there their "doing" would be permanent. In other cases they wasted their money if they attempted to make utilitarian work ornamental. He might be wrong in that principle, but he had always asserted it, and had seen no reason in recent works for any modification of it. He thanked the meeting sincerely for the honour they had conferred upon him by their invitation to address them that evening, and for the indulgence with which they had heard him.

centuries before. (Mr. Ruskin: In writings upon art). Yes; but writing and speaking ran in the same channel. He averred, also, that it produced no effect upon the public, and this they would all admit. But what were the consequences of that gentleman's own artistic philosophy upon himself—the philosopher? That he was sick and tired of such poetic art, and had turned in despair to prosaic political economy."]

[1] [Denmark Hill.]

[2] [See above, § 4, p. 23.]

[3] [Mr. Wyatt had said, "His own faith in Mr. Ruskin's theory that good men only could do good work in any department of art, was greatly shaken by his recollection of the nature of the lives of the artists Titian and Correggio, whose works had been held forth as models."]

[4] [The President (the Rt. Hon. A. J. Beresford-Hope) had said "prose is thought expressed in the best words, while poetry is thought expressed in the best words, and each word in the best place."]

[5] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 29).]

[6] [See *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. pp. 156–158.]

III

THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

(1865, 1866)

THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

By JOHN RUSKIN

GEORGE ALLEN
LONDON AND ORPINGTON
1905

[*Bibliographical Note.*—The papers entitled *The Cestus of Aglaia* first appeared in the *Art Journal* in 1865 and 1866:—

"Prefatory" in the number for January 1865, New Series, vol. iv. pp. 5–6.

"Chapter I." in the number for February 1865, vol. iv. pp. 33–35.

"Chapter II." in the number for March 1865, vol. iv. pp. 73–74.

"Chapter III." in the number for April 1865, vol. iv. pp. 101–102.

"Chapter IV." in the number for May 1865, vol. iv. pp. 129, 130.

"Chapter V." in the number for June 1865, vol. iv. pp. 177, 178.

"Chapter VI." in the number for July 1865, vol. iv. pp. 197–199.

"Chapter VII." in the number for January 1866, New Series, vol. v. pp. 9, 10.

"Chapter VIII." in the number for February 1866, vol. v. pp. 33, 34.

"Chapter IX." in the number for April 1866, vol. v. pp. 97, 98.

Papers I., II., VI., VII., VIII., and IX. were signed "John Ruskin"; III. and IV., "J. Ruskin"; V. was (by inadvertence, no doubt) not signed.

Portions of the papers were reprinted (with slight alterations) in 1869 in *The Queen of the Air*, as follow:—

Chapter ii. (§§ 22–29, part) as §§ 135–142 of that work.

Chapter v. (§ 68) and Chapter vi. (§§ 69–85) as §§ 143–159.

A small portion of the papers (§§ 40 and 41) was also printed in *Ariadne Florentina* (§§ 115 and 116).

The Cestus of Aglaia, with the omission of the passages which had thus been used in *The Queen of the Air*, was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 439–546 (§§ 316–404); and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. ii. pp. 41–150 (§§ 25–113).

In this edition the essays are for the first time reprinted in their complete original form; the paragraphs being numbered consecutively. A title-page and a list of contents are here added by the editors. The titles follow the author's words in the text, wherever possible.

Variæ Lectiones.—There are few variations in the text to record, except in the case of the portions of the essays which were used in *The Queen of the Air* and *Ariadne Florentina*. On the principle, observed throughout this edition, of printing the text as last revised by the author, the corrections made by Ruskin, when using portions of the *Cestus* for those books, are here embodied in the text; but where such corrections were made only because of references to earlier passages of the *Cestus*, or for purposes of curtailment in the new context, the original text (and not that of *The Queen of the Air*) has been adopted. The more interesting of the variations thus resulting are noted under the text, and to them only a reference is here given. The reprint of the other papers in *On the Old Road* was not corrected by Ruskin himself. A few typographical errors crept in,

and the original text is here given. A few minor differences of spelling and punctuation are not included in the following list:—

Chapter ii.—§ 22, line 2, *Queen of the Air* reads "insist . . . on this" for "return . . . , for a little while to"; line 12, see p. 72 *n.*

§ 23, line 8, *Cestus* reads "window jewels" for "jewels in the windows"; line 13, *Cestus* reads "metamorphosism."

§ 25, line 9, *Cestus* reads "all those peculiar" for "peculiarly"; line 10, *Queen of the Air* omits "of which I spoke in the prefatory chapter."

§ 28, line 15, see p. 79 *n.*; lines 22, 23, *Cestus* reads "according to their modesty . . . all other modes of musical art"; last lines, "concent" was printed "consent" in the *Art Journal* and *Queen of the Air*.

Chapter iii.—§ 33, line 11, "ante-chamber" for "ante-chambers" in *On the Old Road*.

§ 40, line 4, see p. 90 *n.*; line 8, *Cestus* reads "perhaps they think" for "that" (in *Ariadne*); line 11, see p. 91 *n.*; fourth line from end, the italics are introduced from *Ariadne*.

Chapter iv.—§ 49, line 10, "note" was misprinted "not" in the *Art Journal* and *On the Old Road*; line 15, "undignified" was misprinted "undignd" in the *Art Journal*.

§ 50, line 9, "Greek" was misprinted "Greeks" in the *Art Journal* and *On the Old Road*.

Chapter v.—§ 66, line 49, "Jérome" here corrected to "Gérome."

Chapter vi.—§ 70, lines 3, 4, see p. 120 *n.*

§ 73, lines 8–13, see p. 122 *n.*; lines 19–35, see p. 122 *n.*; lines 36–38, see p. 122 *n.*

§ 74, line 4, *Cestus* reads "raise" for "exalt"; line 25, *Cestus* reads "and digesting" after "digging."

§ 75, lines 10, 16, see p. 124 *n.*

§ 79, line 33, see p. 126 *n.*

§ 80, line 6, see p. 127 *n.*; line 37, *Cestus* reads "gneissose" for "gneiss and slate."

§ 81, line 2, see p. 128 *n.*; line 4, "it" (in *Cestus* and eds. 1–3 of *Queen of the Air*) has been accidentally omitted in all later issues of that book; line 8, the words "(Pope's 'blue transparent Wandle')" were inserted in the 1883 edition of *Queen of the Air*.

§ 82, line 8, *Cestus* reads "bullets" for "shot"; line 16, *Cestus* adds "the fact is, that" after "for"; lines 22, 25, 30, see p. 129 *n.*

§ 83, lines 3, 4, *Cestus* does not give "though unhappily," and in the next line begins a new sentence after "progress"; line 17, *Cestus* reads "unites" for "united"; lines 23–25, *Cestus* reads ". . . does not see his strength because of the chastened . . . does not recognize his . . ."; line 38, see p. 130 *n.*; seventh line from end, see p. 131 *n.*; last line, *Cestus* reads "yet" after "remaining."

§ 84, line 10, *Cestus* reads "and shapes" after "educates"; line 19, *Cestus* reads "heels" for "will"; lines 25, 26, see p. 132 *n.*

§ 85, footnote, see p. 132 *n.*; line 15, see p. 133 *n.*

Chapter ix.—§ 111, line 10, *On the Old Road* misprints "state" for "stage" (see line 15).]

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THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

"Ποικίλον, ᾧ ἔνι πάντα τετεύχαται· οὐδέ σέ φημι
Ἀπρηκτόν γε νέεσθαι, ὅ τι φρεσὶ σῇσι μενοινᾷς."
(Hom. *Il.* xiv. 220–221.[1])

PREFATORY[2]

1. Not many months ago, a friend, whose familiarity with both living and past schools of Art rendered his opinion of great authority, said casually to me in the course of talk, "I believe we have now as able painters as ever lived; but they never paint as good pictures as were once painted." That was the substance of his saying; I forget the exact words, but their tenor surprised me, and I have thought much of them since. Without pressing the statement too far, or examining it with an unintended strictness, this I believe to be at all events true, that we have men among us, now in Europe, who might have been noble painters, and are not; men whose doings are altogether as wonderful in skill, as inexhaustible in fancy, as the work of the really great painters; and yet these doings of theirs are not great. Shall I write the commonplace that rings in sequence in my ear, and draws on my hand—"are not Great, for they are not (in the broad human and ethical sense) Good"? I write it, and ask forgiveness for the truism, with its implied uncharitableness of blame; for this trite thing is ill

[1] [From the passage in which Aphrodite presents her *cestus* or girdle to Hera: "Take now this broidered girdle, *in which are all things wrought;* and I tell you that you shall not return with aught that is in your mind unaccomplished." The words here italicised seem to have special reference to Ruskin's title: see above, Introduction, p. lxiii.]

[2] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv. pp. 5–6. January 1856.]

understood and little thought upon by any of us, and the implied blame is divided among us all; only let me at once partly modify it, and partly define.

2. In one sense, modern Art has more goodness in it than ever Art had before. Its kindly spirit, its quick sympathy with pure domestic and social feeling, the occasional seriousness of its instructive purpose, and its honest effort to grasp the reality of conceived scenes, are all eminently "good," as compared with the insane picturesqueness and conventional piety of many among the old masters. Such domestic painting, for instance, as Richter's in Germany, Edward Frère's in France, and Hook's in England,[1] together with such historical and ideal work as——perhaps the reader would be offended with me were I to set down the several names that occur to me here, so I will set down one only, and say—as that of Paul de la Roche; such work, I repeat, as these men have done, or are doing, is entirely good in its influence on the public mind; and may, in thankful exultation, be compared with the renderings of besotted, vicious, and vulgar human life perpetrated by Dutch painters, or with the deathful formalism and fallacy of what was once called "Historical Art."[2] Also, this gentleness and veracity of theirs, being in part communicable, are gradually learned, though in a somewhat servile manner, yet not without a sincere sympathy, by many inferior painters, so that our exhibitions and currently popular books are full of very lovely and pathetic ideas, expressed with a care, and appealing to an interest, quite unknown in past times. I will take two instances of merely average power, as more illustrative of what I mean than any more singular and distinguished work could be. Last year, in the British Institution, there were two pictures

[1] [For Richter, see Vol. III. p. 264, Vol. IV. p. 356, Vol. XIV. p. 361, and Vol. XV. pp. 204, 224; for Frère, Vol. XIV. pp. 142, 174, 347, and compare "Flamboyant Architecture," below, pp. 249, 270; for Hook, the passages indexed at Vol. XIV. p. 317; and for Paul Delaroche, below, p. 205, Vol. III. p. 199, Vol. XIV. p. 488, and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 35.]

[2] [For the vulgarity of the Dutch school, see Vol. VII. pp. 363 *seq.*; and for "Historical Art," Vol. XII. pp. 151–152.]

by the same painter, one of a domestic, the other of a sacred subject.[1] I will say nothing of the way in which they were painted; it may have been bad, or good, or neither: it is not to my point. I wish to direct attention only to the conception of them. One, "Cradled in his Calling," was of a fisherman and his wife, and helpful grown-up son, and helpless new-born little one; the two men carrying the young child up from the shore, rocking it between them in the wet net for a hammock, the mother looking on joyously, and the baby laughing. The thought was pretty and good, and one might go on dreaming over it long—not unprofitably. But the second picture was more interesting. I describe it only in the circumstances of the invented scene—sunset after the crucifixion. The bodies have been taken away, and the crosses are left lying on the broken earth; a group of children have strayed up the hill, and stopped beside them in such shadowy awe as is possible to childhood, and they have picked up one or two of the drawn nails to feel how sharp they are. Meantime a girl with her little brother—goat-herds both—have been watering their flock at Kidron, and are driving it home. The girl, strong in grace and honour of youth, carrying her pitcher of water on her erect head, has gone on past the place steadily, minding her flock; but her little curly-headed brother, with cheeks of burning Eastern brown, has lingered behind to look, and is feeling the point of one of the nails, held in another child's hand. A lovely little kid of the goats has stayed behind to keep him company, and is amusing itself by jumping backwards and forwards over an arm of the cross. The sister looks back, and, wondering what he can have stopped in that dreadful place for, waves her hand for the little boy to come away.

I have no hesitation in saying that, as compared with

[1] [By Philip Richard Morris, A.R.A. (1833–1902). A woodcut of "Cradled in his Calling" appeared in the *Art Journal* for June 1872, N.S., vol. xi. p. 162; of the other picture, entitled "Where they Crucified Him," a steel engraving (by J. C. Armytage) appeared in the same journal for October 1868, N.S., vol. vii. p. 200.]

the ancient and stereotyped conceptions of the "Taking down from the Cross," there is a living feeling in that picture which is of great price. It may perhaps be weak, nay, even superficial, or untenable—that will depend on the other conditions of character out of which it springs—but, so far as it reaches, it is pure and good; and we may gain more by looking thoughtfully at such a picture than at any even of the least formal types of the work of older schools. It would be unfair to compare it with first-rate, or even approximately first-rate designs; but even accepting such unjust terms, put it beside Rembrandt's ghastly white sheet, laid over the two poles at the Cross-foot,[1] and see which has most good in it for you of any communicable kind.

8. I trust, then, that I fully admit whatever may, on due deliberation, be alleged in favour of modern Art. Nay, I have heretofore asserted more for some modern Art than others were disposed to admit, nor do I withdraw one word from such assertion. But when all has been said and granted that may be, there remains this painful fact to be dealt with,—the consciousness, namely, both in living artists themselves and in us their admirers, that something, and that not a little, is wrong with us; that they, relentlessly examined, could not say they thoroughly knew how to paint, and that we, relentlessly examined, could not say we thoroughly know to judge. The best of our painters will look a little to us, the beholders, for confirmation of his having done well. We, appealed to, look to each other to see what we ought to say. If we venture to find fault, however submissively, the artist will probably feel a little uncomfortable: he will by no means venture to meet us with a serenely crushing "Sir, it cannot be better done," in the manner of Albert Dürer.[2] And yet, if it could not

[1] [The reference is to Rembrandt's etching of "The Descent from the Cross," in which the poles with the white sheet occupy the foreground (see No. 90 in Dutuit's *L'Œuvre Complet de Rembrandt*.]

[2] [For other passages where Ruskin cites this saying, see Vol. V. p. 331; Vol. VI. p. 159; Vol. XI. p. 14; Vol. XIII. p. 423; Vol. XIV. p. 393; and compare § 22, below, p. 72.]

be better done, he, of all men, should know that best, nor fear to say so; it is good for himself, and for us, that he should assert that, if he knows that. The last time my dear old friend William Hunt came to see me, I took down one of his early drawings for him to see (three blue plums and one amber one, and two nuts). So he looked at it, happily, for a minute or two and then said, "Well, it's very nice, isn't it? I did not think I could have done so well."[1] The saying was entirely right, exquisitely modest and true; only I fear he would not have had the courage to maintain that his drawing was good, if anybody had been there to say otherwise. Still, having done well, he knew it; and what is more no man ever does do well without knowing it: he may not know *how* well, nor be conscious of the best of his own qualities; nor measure, or care to measure, the relation of his power to that of other men, but he will know that what he has done is, in an intended, accomplished, and ascertainable degree, good. Every able and honest workman, as he wins a right to rest, so he wins a right to approval,—his own if no one's beside; nay, his only true rest *is* in the calm consciousness that the thing has been honourably done—*συνείδησις ὅτι καλόν*. I do not use the Greek words in pedantry, I want them for future service and interpretation;[2] no English words, nor any of any other language, would do as well. For I mean to try to show, and believe I *can* show, that a simple and sure conviction of our having done rightly is not only an attainable, but a necessary seal and sign of our having so done; and that the doing well or rightly, and ill or wrongly, are both conditions of the whole being of each person, coming of a nature in him which affects all things that he may do, from the least to the greatest, according to the noble old phrase for the conquering rightness, of "integrity," "wholeness," or "wholesomeness." So that when we do external things (that are our business) ill, it is a sign that internal,

[1] [For another account of this conversation, see Vol. XIV. p. 445.]

[2] [See below, § 27, p. 78; and also § 24 *n.*, p. 75: a passage from the MS. which Ruskin afterwards omitted.]

and, in fact, that all things, are ill with us; and when we do external things well, it is a sign that internal and all things are well with us. And I believe there are two principal adversities to this wholesomeness of work, and to all else that issues out of wholeness of inner character, with which we have in these days specially to contend. The first is the variety of Art round us, tempting us to thoughtless imitation; the second our own want of belief in the existence of a rule of right.

4. (I.) I say the first is the variety of Art around us. No man can pursue his own track in peace, nor obtain consistent guidance, if doubtful of his track. All places are full of inconsistent example, all mouths of contradictory advice, all prospects of opposite temptations. The young artist sees myriads of things he would like to do, but cannot learn from their authors how they were done, nor choose decisively any method which he may follow with the accuracy and confidence necessary to success. He is not even sure if his thoughts are his own; for the whole atmosphere round him is full of floating suggestion: those which are his own he cannot keep pure, for he breathes a dust of decayed ideas, wreck of the souls of dead nations, driven by contrary winds. He may stiffen himself (and all the worse for him) into an iron self-will, but if the iron has any magnetism in it, he cannot pass a day without finding himself, at the end of it, instead of sharpened or tempered, covered with a ragged fringe of iron filings. If there be anything better than iron—living wood fibre—in him, he cannot be allowed any natural growth, but gets hacked in every extremity, and bossed over with lumps of frozen clay;—grafts of incongruous blossom that will never set; while some even recognise no need of knife or clay (though both are good in a gardener's hand), but deck themselves out with incongruous glittering, like a Christmas tree. Even were the style chosen true to his own nature, and persisted in, there is harm in the very eminence of the models set before him at the beginning of his career.

If he feels their power, they make him restless and impatient, it may be despondent, it may be madly and fruitlessly ambitious. If he does not feel it, he is sure to be struck by what is weakest or slightest of their peculiar qualities; fancies that *this* is what they are praised for; tries to catch the trick of it; and whatever easy vice or mechanical habit the master may have been betrayed or warped into, the unhappy pupil watches and adopts, triumphant in its ease:—has not sense to steal the peacock's feather, but imitates its voice. Better for him, far better, never to have seen what had been accomplished by others, but to have gained gradually his own quiet way, or at least with his guide only a step in advance of him, and the lantern low on the difficult path. Better even, it has lately seemed, to be guideless and lightless; fortunate those who, by desolate effort, trying hither and thither, have groped their way to some independent power. So, from Cornish rock, from St. Giles's Lane, from Thames mudshore, you get your Prout, your Hunt, your Turner;[1] not, indeed, any of them well able to spell English, nor taught so much of their own business as to lay a colour safely; but yet at last, or first, doing somehow something, wholly ineffective on the national mind, yet real, and valued at last after they are dead, in money;—valued otherwise not even at so much as the space of dead brick wall it would cover; their work being left for years packed in parcels at the National Gallery, or hung conclusively out of sight under the shadowy iron vaults of Kensington.[2] The men themselves, quite inarticulate, determine nothing of their Art, interpret nothing of their own minds; teach perhaps a trick or two of their stage business in early life—as, for instance, that

[1] [Prout was born in Plymouth (Vol. XII. p. 305), but taken early to Cornwall (*ibid.*, p. 308). William Hunt was born in Belton Street (now Endell Street), Long Acre, as appears from the register of his baptism at St. Giles's-in-the-Fields, and he lived in London (Vol. XIV. p. 374). For the early surroundings of Turner (born in Maiden Lane, almost within a stone's-throw of the river), see Vol. VII. pp. 376–377.]

[2] [For this neglect of the Turner drawings, see Vol. XIII. pp. xli. *seq.*; and compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 101 (Vol. XVIII. p. 149).]

it is good where there is much black to break it with white, and where there is much white to break it with black, etc., etc.; in later life remain silent altogether, or speak only in despair (fretful or patient according to their character); one who might have been among the best of them,[1] the last we heard of, finding refuge for an entirely honest heart from a world which declares honesty to be impossible, only in a madness nearly as sorrowful as its own;—the religious madness which makes a beautiful soul ludicrous and ineffectual; and so passes away, bequeathing for our inheritance from its true and strong life, a pretty song about a tiger, another about a bird-cage, two or three golden couplets, which no one will ever take the trouble to understand,—the spiritual portrait of the ghost of a flea, —and the critical opinion that "the unorganized blots of Rubens and Titian are not Art."[2] Which opinion the public mind perhaps not boldly indorsing, is yet incapable of pronouncing adversely to it, that the said blots of Titian and Rubens *are* Art, perceiving for itself little good in them, and hanging *them* also well out of its way, at tops of walls (Titian's portrait of Charles V. at Munich, for example; Tintoret's Susannah, and Veronese's Magdalen, in the Louvre[3]), that it may have room and readiness for what may be generally termed "railroad work," bearing on matters more immediately in hand; said public looking to the present pleasure of its fancy, and the portraiture of itself in official and otherwise imposing or entertaining circumstances, as the only "Right" cognizable by it.

[1] [For a further mention of William Blake, see below, §§ 67, 85 (pp. 117, 133). Ruskin here refers to the song in *Songs of Experience* ("Tiger, tiger, burning bright") and to *Auguries of Innocence* ("A Robin Redbreast in a cage"). For "golden couplets," quoted from Blake, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 21 (from the *Book of Thel*), and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 74 (from *Auguries of Innocence*). For other references to the poet-painter, see Vol. V. pp. 138, 323; Vol. VIII. p. 256 *n.*; Vol. XIV. pp. 354–355; and Vol. XV. p. 223.]

[2] [For a reproduction of the Ghost of a Flea, see Alexander Gilchrist's *Life of William Blake*, 1863, vol. i. p. 255; and for the opinion on Rubens and Titian, *ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 149.]

[3] [On the "skying" of Titian's "Charles V.," see above, p. 28 *n.*; for similar criticisms on the Louvre, see Vol. XII. pp. 411, 472. The Tintoret is now hung on the line.]

5. (II.) And this is a deeper source of evil, by far, than the former one, for though it is ill for us to strain towards a right for which we have never ripened it is worse for us to believe in no right at all. "Anything," we say, "that a clever man can do to amuse us is good; what does not amuse us we do not want. Taste is assuredly a frivolous, apparently a dangerous gift; vicious persons and vicious nations have it; we are a practical people, content to know what we like, wise in not liking it too much, and when tired of it, wise in getting something we like better. Painting is of course an agreeable ornamental Art, maintaining a number of persons respectably, deserving therefore encouragement, and getting it pecuniarily, to a hitherto unheard-of extent. What would you have more?" This is, I believe, very nearly our Art-creed. The fact being (very ascertainably by any one who will take the trouble to examine the matter), that there is a cultivated Art among all great nations, inevitably necessary to them as the fulfilment of one part of their human nature. None but savage nations are without Art, and civilized nations who do their Art ill, do it because there is something deeply wrong at their hearts. They paint badly as a paralysed man stammers, because his life is touched somewhere within; when the deeper life is full in a people, they speak clearly and rightly; paint clearly and rightly; think clearly and rightly. There is some reverse effect, but very little. Good pictures do not teach a nation; they are the signs of its having been taught. Good thoughts do not form a nation; it must be formed before it can think them. Let it once decay at the heart, and its good work and good thoughts will become subtle luxury and aimless sophism; and it and they will perish together.

6. It is my purpose, therefore, in some subsequent papers, with such help as I may anywise receive,[1] to try if there may not be determined some of the simplest laws which are

[1] [Ruskin, as will be seen, hoped that his papers would provoke correspondence: see below, pp. 70, 134.]

indeed, binding on Art practice and judgment. Beginning with elementary principle, and proceeding upwards as far as guiding laws are discernible, I hope to show, that if we do not yet know them, there are at least such laws to be known, and that it is of a deep and intimate importance to any people, especially to the English at this time, that their children should be sincerely taught whatever arts they learn, and in riper age become capable of a just choice and wise pleasure in the accomplished works of the artist. But I earnestly ask for help in this task. It is one which can only come to good issue by the consent and aid of many thinkers; and I would, with the permission of the Editor of this Journal, invite debate on the subject of each paper, together with brief and clear statements of consent or objection, with name of consentor or objector; so that after courteous discussion had, and due correction of the original statement, we may get something at last set down, as harmoniously believed by such and such known artists. If nothing can thus be determined, at least the manner and variety of dissent will show whether it is owing to the nature of the subject, or to the impossibility, under present circumstances, that different persons should approach it from similar points of view; and the inquiry, whatever its immediate issue, cannot be ultimately fruitless.

CHAPTER I[1]

[THE BLACK OUTLINE]

7. OUR knowledge of human labour, if intimate enough, will, I think, mass it for the most part into two kinds—mining and moulding; the labour that seeks for things, and the labour that shapes them. Of these the last should be always orderly, for we ought to have some conception of the whole of what we have to make before we try to make any part of it; but the labour of seeking must be often methodless, following the veins of the mine as they branch, or trying for them where they are broken. And the mine, which we would now open into the souls of men, as they govern the mysteries of their handicrafts, being rent into many dark and divided ways, it is not possible to map our work beforehand, or resolve on its directions. We will not attempt to bind ourselves to any methodical treatment of our subject, but will get at the truths of it here and there, as they seem extricable; only, though we cannot know to what depth we may have to dig, let us know clearly what we are digging for. We desire to find by what rule some Art is called good, and other Art bad: we desire to find the conditions of character in the artist which are essentially connected with the goodness of his work: we desire to find what are the methods of practice which form this character or corrupt it; and finally, how the formation or corruption of this character is connected with the general prosperity of nations.

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv., pp. 33–35, February 1865. The first word being printed in plain capitals instead of with an ornamental initial letter generally used by the *Art Journal*, the following note was added by the author: "I beg the Editor's and reader's pardon for an informality in the type; but I shrink from ornamental letters, and have begged for a legible capital instead."]

8. And all this we want to learn practically: not for mere pleasant speculation on things that have been; but for instant direction of those that are yet to be. My first object is to get at some fixed principles for the teaching of Art to our youth; and I am about to ask, of all who may be able to give me a serviceable answer, and with and for all who are anxious for such answer, what arts should be generally taught to the English boy and girl,—by what methods,—and to what ends? How well, or how imperfectly, our youth of the higher classes should be disciplined in the practice of music and painting?—how far, among the lower classes, exercise in certain mechanical arts might become a part of their school life?[1]—how far, in the adult life of this nation, the Fine Arts may advisably supersede or regulate the mechanical Arts? Plain questions these, enough; clearly also important ones; and, as clearly, boundless ones—mountainous—infinite in contents—only to be mined into in a scrambling manner by poor inquirers, as their present tools and sight may serve.

9. I have often been accused of dogmatism,[2] and confess to the holding strong opinions on some matters; but I tell the reader in sincerity, and entreat him in sincerity to believe, that I do not think myself able to dictate anything positive respecting questions of this magnitude. The one thing I am sure of is, the need of some form of dictation; or, where that is as yet impossible, at least of consistent experiment, for the just solution of doubts which present themselves every day in more significant and more impatient temper of interrogation.

Here is one, for instance, lying at the base of all the rest—namely, what may be the real dignity of mechanical Art itself? I cannot express the amazed awe, the crushed humility, with which I sometimes watch a locomotive take

[1] [For the place of music in education, see *Time and Tide*, § 61 (Vol. XVII. p. 368); and for drawing, Vol. XVI. p. xxix.]

[2] [See Preface to *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 5); and compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 85.]

its breath at a railway station, and think what work there is in its bars and wheels, and what manner of men they must be who dig brown iron-stone out of the ground, and forge it into THAT! What assemblage of accurate and mighty faculties in them; more than fleshly power over melting crag and coiling fire, fettered, and finessed at last into the precision of watchmaking; Titanian hammer-strokes beating, out of lava, these glittering cylinders and timely-respondent valves, and fine ribbed rods, which touch each other as a serpent writhes, in noiseless gliding, and omnipotence of grasp; infinitely complex anatomy of active steel, compared with which the skeleton of a living creature would seem, to a careless observer, clumsy and vile—a mere morbid secretion and phosphatous prop of flesh! What would the men who thought out this—who beat it out, who touched it into its polished calm of power, who set it to its appointed task, and triumphantly saw it fulfil this task to the utmost of their will—feel or think about this weak hand of mine, timidly leading a little stain of water-colour, which I cannot manage, into an imperfect shadow[1] of something else—mere failure in every motion, and endless disappointment; what, I repeat, would these Iron-dominant Genii think of me? and what ought I to think of them?[2]

10. But as I reach this point of reverence, the unreasonable thing is sure to give a shriek as of a thousand unanimous vultures, which leaves me shuddering in real physical pain for some half minute following; and assures me, during slow recovery, that a people which can endure such fluting and piping among them is not likely soon to have

[1] [Compare Ruskin's frequent application of Shakespeare's line, "The best in this kind are but shadows"; *Aratra Pentelici*, § 142; *Eagle's Nest*, §§ 39, 148; *Ariadne Florentina*, § 256.]

[2] ["It will not be easy," says Professor P. Geddes, F.R.S., in quoting this passage, "to find any panegyric of machines and their makers, though the age is rich in such literature, to match this, combining, as it does, the scientific appreciation of Babbage's classic *Economy of Machines and Manufactures*, with the artistic appreciation which we find in the Surfaceman's [Alex. Anderson] *Songs of the Rail*" (*John Ruskin, Economist*, p. 21).]

its modest ear pleased by aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song.[1] Perhaps I am then led on into meditation respecting the spiritual nature of the Tenth Muse, who invented this gracious instrument, and guides its modulation by stokers' fingers; meditation, also, as to the influence of her invention amidst the other parts of the Parnassian melody of English education. Then it cannot but occur to me to inquire how far this modern "pneuma," Steam, may be connected with other pneumatic powers talked of in that old religious literature, of which we fight so fiercely to keep the letters bright, and the working valves, so to speak, in good order (while we let the steam of it all carefully off into the cold condenser), what connection, I say, this modern "spiritus," in its valve-directed inspiration, has with that more ancient spiritus, or warm breath, which people used to think they might be "born of."[2] Whether, in fine, there be any such thing as an entirely human Art, with spiritual motive power, and signal as of human voice, distinct inherently from this mechanical Art, with its mechanical motive force, and signal of vulture voice. For after all, this shrieking thing, whatever the fine make of it may be, can but pull, or push, and do oxen's work in an impetuous manner. That proud king of Assyria, who lost his reason, and ate oxen's food,[3] would he have much more cause for pride, if he had been allowed to spend his reason in doing oxen's work?

11. These things, then, I would fain consult about, and plead with the reader for his patience in council, even while we begin with the simplest practical matters; for ravelled briars of thought entangle our feet, even at our first step. We would teach a boy to draw. Well, what shall he draw?—Gods, or men, or beasts, or clouds, or leaves, or iron cylinders? Are there any gods to be drawn? any

[1] [Collins, *Ode to Evening*; quoted also in *Queen of the Air*, § 43 (below, p. 345).]
[2] [John iii. 8, etc. For the meaning of the word "spirit," see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 23 (Vol. XVIII. p. 73), and *Queen of the Air*, § 52 (below, pp. 351–352).]
[3] [Daniel iv.]

men or women worth drawing, or only worth caricaturing? What are the æsthetic laws respecting iron cylinders; and would Titian have liked them rusty, or fresh cleaned with oil and rag, to fill the place once lightened by St. George's armour? How can we begin the smallest practical business, unless we get first some whisper of answer to such questions? We may tell a boy to draw a straight line straight, and a crooked one crooked; but what else?

And it renders the dilemma, or multilemma, more embarrassing, that whatever teaching is to be had from the founders and masters of art is quite unpractical. The first source from which we should naturally seek for guidance would, of course, be the sayings of great workmen; but a sorrowful perception presently dawns on us that the great workmen have nothing to say. They are silent, absolutely in proportion to their creative power.[1] The contributions to our practical knowledge of the principles of Art, furnished by the true captains of its hosts, may, I think, be arithmetically summed by the o of Giotto:[2] the inferior teachers become didactic in the degree of their inferiority; and those who can do nothing have always much to advise.

12. This however, observe, is only true of advice direct. You never, I grieve to say, get from the great men a plain answer to a plain question;[3] still less can you entangle them in any agreeable gossip, out of which something might unawares be picked up. But of enigmatical teaching, broken signs and sullen mutterings, of which you can understand nothing, and may make anything;—of confused discourse in the work itself, about the work, as in Dürer's "Melencolia";[4]—and of discourse not merely

[1] [As, for instance, Turner "silent as a granite crest": see Vol. VI. p. 275, and Vol. VII. p. 249.]

[2] [For the round o of Giotto, see Vol. XV. p. 39; and compare below, § 70, p. 120.]

[3] [On this subject compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 87 (Vol. XVII. p. 208), and *Queen of the Air*, § 17 (below, p. 309).]

[4] [See Vol. VII. p. 312, where the plate is given, and other references to it are noted.]

confused, but apparently unreasonable and ridiculous, about all manner of things *except* the work,—the great Egyptian and Greek artists give us much: from which, however, all that by utmost industry may be gathered, comes briefly to this,—that they have no conception of what modern men of science call the "Conservation of forces,"[1] but deduce all the force they feel in themselves, and hope for in others, from certain fountains or centres of perpetually supplied strength, to which they give various names: as, for instance, these seven following, more specially:—

1. The Spirit of Light, moral and physical, by name the "Physician-Destroyer," bearing arrows in his hand, and a lyre; pre-eminently the destroyer of human pride, and the guide of human harmony. Physically, Lord of the Sun; and a mountain Spirit, because the sun seems first to rise and set upon hills.[2]
2. The Spirit of helpful Darkness—of shade and rest. Night the Restorer.[3]
3. The Spirit of Wisdom in *Conduct*, bearing, in sign of conquest over troublous and disturbing evil, the skin of the wild goat, and the head of the slain Spirit of physical storm. In her hand, a weaver's shuttle, or a spear.[4]
4. The Spirit of Wisdom in *Arrangement;* called the

[1] [Compare Vol. XVIII. p. 341.]

[2] [For the characterisation here of Apollo, Athena, and Hephæstus, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 45, and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 89 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 102, 461). For Apollo, see also *Queen of the Air*, §§ 8, 13 (below, pp. 302, 305); and for his titles, "Physician-Destroyer," *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 420 *n.*). For numerous other references to Apollo, see the General Index.]

[3] [Here Ruskin is apparently thinking of the personification of Sleep; of which there is so beautiful a representation in the winged head of Hypnos, in bronze, in the British Museum (see E. T. Cook's *Handbook to the Greek and Roman Antiquities*, p. 433).]

[4] [Athena, or (in Egypt) Neith. For other meanings in the ægis (or goat-skin coat) of Athena, see *Queen of the Air*, § 94, p. 382; for Medusa as the spirit of storm, *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 185). The sign of a shuttle is often set upon the head of Neith (see E. A. Wallis Budge: *The Gods of the Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 451).]

Lord or Father of Truth: throned on a four-square cubit, with a measuring-rod in his hand, or a potter's wheel.[1]

5. The Spirit of Wisdom in *Adaptation;* or of serviceable labour: the Master of human effort in its glow; and Lord of useful fire, moral and physical.[2]
6. The Spirit, first of young or nascent grace, and then of fulfilled beauty: the wife of the Lord of Labour.[3] I have taken the two lines in which Homer describes her girdle, for the motto of these essays: partly in memory of these outcast fancies of the great masters: and partly for the sake of a meaning which we shall find as we go on.[4]
7. The Spirit of pure human life and gladness. Master of wholesome vital passion; and physically, Lord of the Vine.[5]

18. From these ludicrous notions of motive force, inconsistent as they are with modern physiology and organic chemistry, we may, nevertheless, hereafter gather, in the details of their various expressions, something useful to us. But I grieve to say that when our provoking teachers descend from dreams about the doings of Gods to assertions respecting the deeds of Men, little beyond the blankest discouragement is to be had from them. Thus, they represent the ingenuity, and deceptive or imitative Arts of men, under the type of a Master who builds labyrinths, and makes images of living creatures, for evil purposes, or for

[1] [Here the reference is to the Egyptian Phtah; called "Lord of Truth" (*Ethics of the Dust*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 226, 362); "the pedestal on which he stands is of the shape of an Egyptian cubit, metaphorically used as the hieroglyphic for truth"; he holds "the emblem of stability, commonly called the Nilometer"; and is sometimes represented with a potter's wheel (Arundale's *Gallery of Antiquities*, p. 13).]

[2] [For Hephæstus (Vulcan), see *Queen of the Air*, § 13 (below, p. 305), and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 73.]

[3] [For notes on Greek ideas of Aphrodite (Venus), see *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 185 *seq.*, and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 69 *n.* (Vol. XVIII. p. 446); and for Aglaia passing into Aphrodite, *Munera Pulveris*, § 101 (Vol. XVII. p. 226).]

[4] [On this passage, see the Introduction, above, p. lxiii.]

[5] [For Dionysus (Bacchus) in these functions, see *Unto this Last*, § 63, and *Munera Pulveris*, § 102 *n.* (Vol. XVII. pp. 87, 227).]

none; and pleases himself and the people with idle jointing of toys, and filling of them with quicksilver motion; and brings his child to foolish, remediless catastrophe, in fancying his father's work as good, and strong, and fit to bear sunlight, as if it had been God's work.[1] So, again, they represent the foresight and kindly zeal of men by a most rueful figure, of one chained down to a rock by the brute force and bias and methodical hammer-stroke of the merely practical Arts, and by the merciless Necessities or Fates of present time; and so having his very heart torn piece by piece out of him by a vulturous hunger and sorrow, respecting things he cannot reach, nor prevent, nor achieve.[2] So, again, they describe the sentiment and pure soul-power of Man, as moving the very rocks and trees, and giving them life, by its sympathy with them; but losing its own best-beloved thing by mere venomous accident: and afterwards going down to hell for it, in vain; being impatient and unwise, though full of gentleness; and, in the issue, after as vainly trying to teach this gentleness to others, and to guide them out of their lower passions to sunlight of true healing Life, it drives the sensual heart of them, and the gods that govern it, into mere and pure frenzy of resolved rage, and gets torn to pieces by them, and ended; only the nightingale staying by its grave to sing.[3] All which appearing to be anything rather than helpful or encouraging instruction for beginners, we shall, for the present, I think, do well to desire these enigmatical teachers to put up their pipes and be gone; and betaking ourselves in the humblest manner to intelligible business, at least set down some definite matter for decision, to be made a first stepping-stone at the shore of this brook of despond and difficulty.

[1] [For the legend of Dædalus, as typical of "the power of mechanical as opposed to imaginative art," and for the labyrinth that he built, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 28; and for details of the legend, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 206, and the note there given. For Icarus, see also a passing reference in *Mornings in Florence*, § 126.]

[2] [For other references to Prometheus, see *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 149, 202, 206.]

[3] [For other allusions to the myths of Orpheus, see below, p. 178; "Tortoise of Ægina," § 21 (Vol. XX.); and *Mornings in Florence*, § 145.]

14. Most masters agree (and I believe they are right) that the first thing to be taught to any pupil, is how to draw an outline of such things as can be outlined.[1]

Now, there are two kinds of outline—the soft and hard. One must be executed with a soft instrument, as a piece of chalk or lead; and the other with some instrument producing for ultimate result a firm line of equal darkness; as a pen with ink, or the engraving tool on wood or metal.

And these two kinds of outline have both of them their particular objects and uses, as well as their proper scale of size in work. Thus Raphael will sketch a miniature head with his pen, but always takes chalk if he draws of the size of life. So also Holbein, and generally the other strong masters.

But the black outline seems to be peculiarly that which we ought to begin to reason upon, because it is simple and open-hearted, and does not endeavour to escape into mist. A pencil line may be obscurely and undemonstrably wrong; false in a cowardly manner, and without confession: but the ink line, if it goes wrong at all, goes wrong with a will, and may be convicted at our leisure, and put to such shame as its black complexion is capable of. May we, therefore, begin with the hard line? It will lead us far, if we can come to conclusions about it.

15. Presuming, then, that our schoolboys are such as Coleridge would have them—*i.e.*, that they are

> "Innocent, steady, and wise,
> And delight in the things of earth, water, and skies,"[2]

and, above all, in a moral state in which they may be trusted with ink—we put a pen into their hands (shall it be steel?) and a piece of smooth white paper, and something before them to draw. But what? "Nay," the reader answers, "you had surely better give them pencil first, for that may be rubbed out." Perhaps so; but I am not sure

[1] [On some change in Ruskin's views on this subject, see Vol. XV. p. xxvi.]
[2] ["Metrical Feet. Lesson for a boy"—to his son, Derwent (1807).]

that the power of rubbing out is an advantage; at all events, we shall best discover what the pencil outline ought to be, by investigating the power of the black one, and the kind of things we can draw with it.

16. Suppose, for instance, my first scholar has a turn for entomology, and asks me to draw for him a wasp's leg, or its sting; having first humanely provided me with a model by pulling one off, or out. My pen must clearly be fine at the point, and my execution none of the boldest, if I comply with his request. If I decline, and he thereupon challenges me at least to draw the wasp's body, with its pretty bands of black crinoline—behold us involved instantly in the profound question of local colour! Am I to tell him he is not to draw outlines of bands or spots? How, then, shall he know a wasp's body from a bee's? I escape, for the present, by telling him the story of Dædalus and the honeycomb;[1] set him to draw a pattern of hexagons, and lay the question of black bands up in my mind.

17. The next boy, we may suppose, is a conchologist, and asks me to draw a white snail-shell for him! Veiling my consternation at the idea of having to give a lesson on the perspective of geometrical spirals,[2] with an "austere regard of control"[3] I pass on to the next student:—Who, bringing after him, with acclamation, all the rest of the form, requires of me contemptuously, to "draw a horse."

And I retreat in final discomfiture; for not only I cannot myself execute, but I have never seen, an outline, quite simply and rightly done, either of a shell or a pony; nay, not so much as of a pony's nose. At a girls' school we might perhaps take refuge in rosebuds; but these boys, with their impatient battle-cry, "my kingdom for a horse,"[4] what is to be done for them?

18. Well, this is what I should like to be able to do

[1] [See, again, *Aratra Pentelici*, § 206 *n.*]
[2] [A lesson, however, which Ruskin gave in his *Rudimentary Series* at Oxford (see Vol. XX.).]
[3] [Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, Act ii. sc. 5, 73.]
[4] [*Richard III.*, Act v. sc. 4.]

for them. To show them an enlarged black outline, nobly done, of the two sides of a coin of Tarentum,[1] with that fiery rider kneeling, careless, on his horse's neck, and reclined on his surging dolphin, with the curled sea lapping round them; and then to convince my boys that no one (unless it were Taras's father himself, with the middle prong of his trident) could draw a horse like that, without learning;—that for poor mortals like us there must be sorrowful preparatory stages; and, having convinced them of this, set them to draw (if I had a good copy to give them) a horse's hoof, or his rib, or a vertebra of his thunder-clothed neck, or any other constructive piece of him.

19. Meanwhile, all this being far out of present reach, I am fain to shrink back into my snail-shell,[2] both for shelter and calm of peace; and ask of artists in general how the said shell, or any other simple object involving varied contour, *should* be outlined in ink?—how thick the lines should be, and how varied? My own idea of an elementary outline is that it should be unvaried; distinctly visible; not thickened towards the shaded sides of the object; not express any exaggerations of aerial perspective, nor fade at the further side of a cup as if it were the further side of a crater of a volcano; and therefore, in objects of ordinary size, show no gradation at all, unless where the real outline disappears, as in soft contours and folds. Nay, I think it may even be a question whether we ought not to resolve that the line should never gradate itself at all, but terminate quite bluntly! Albert Dürer's "Cannon"[3] furnishes a very peculiar and curious example

[1] [For another reference to "the beautiful coins of Tarentum," see *Queen of the Air*, § 39 (below, p. 338); one of the coins is reproduced on Plate XVIII., and compare "The Study of Architecture" (above, p. 22). Specimens of them may be seen in the British Museum. For the legend of Taras (son of Neptune), the mythical founder of the city, see the notes for a lecture on "The Riders of Tarentum" in Vol. XX.]

[2] [See Ruskin's drawings of shells in his Oxford Drawing School (Educational Series, Nos. 191–197).]

[3] [See below, p. 113, where the plate is given. Compare Vol. VII. p. 305, and see *Elements of Drawing*, § 98 (Vol. XV. p. 86, and Fig. 13); *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, No. 121 (Vol. XX.); and *Ariadne Florentina*, § 11.]

of this entirely equal line, even to the extreme distance; being in that respect opposed to nearly all his other work, which is wrought mostly by tapering lines; and his work in general, and Holbein's, which appear to me entirely typical of rightness in use of the graver and pen, are to be considered carefully in their relation to Rembrandt's loose etching, as in the "Spotted Shell."[1]

20. But I do not want to press my own opinions now, even when I have been able to form them distinctly. I want to get at some unanimous expression of opinion and method; and would propose, therefore, in all modesty, this question for discussion, by such artists as will favour me with answer,* giving their names:—*How ought the pen to be used to outline a form of varied contour; and ought outline to be entirely pure, or, even in its most elementary types, to pass into some suggestion of shade in the inner masses?* For there are no examples whatever of pure outlines by the great masters. They are always touched or modified by inner lines, more or less suggestive of solid form, and they are lost, or accentuated, in certain places, not so much in conformity with any explicable law, as in expression of the master's future purpose, or of what he wishes immediately to note in the character of the object. Most of them are irregular memoranda, not systematic elementary work: of those which are systematized, the greater part are carried far beyond the initiative stage; and Holbein's are nearly all washed with colour: the exact degree in which he depends upon the softening and extending his touch of ink by subsequent solution of it, being indeterminable, though exquisitely successful. His stupendous drawings in the British Museum (I can justly

* I need not say that this inquiry can only be pursued by the help of those who will take it up good-humouredly and graciously: such help I will receive in the spirit in which it is given; entering into no controversy, but questioning further where there is doubt: gathering all I can into focus, and passing silently by what seems at last irreconcilable.

[1] [See Vol. IV. p. 303.]

use no other term than "stupendous," of their consummately decisive power) furnish finer instances of this treatment than any at Basle; but it would be very difficult to reduce them to a definable law. Venetian outlines are rare, except preparations on canvas, often shaded before colouring;—while Raphael's, if not shaded, are quite loose, and useless as examples to a beginner: so that we are left wholly without guide as to the preparatory steps on which we should decisively insist; and I am myself haunted by the notion that the students were forced to shade firmly from the very beginning, in all the greatest schools; only we never can get hold of any beginnings, or any weak work of those schools: whatever is bad in them comes of decadence, not infancy.

21. I purpose in the next essay to enter upon quite another part of the inquiry, so as to leave time for the reception of communications bearing upon the present paper: and, according to their importance, I shall ask leave still to defer our return to the subject until I have had time to reflect upon them, and to collect for public service the concurrent opinions they may contain.

CHAPTER II[1]

[MODESTY]

22. "SIR, it cannot be better done."

We will return,[2] with the reader's permission, for a little while, to this comfortful saying of Albert Dürer's, in order to find out, if we may, what Modesty is; which it will be well for painters, readers, and especially critics, to know, before going farther. What it is; or, rather, who she is; her fingers being among the deftest in laying the ground-threads of Aglaia's Cestus.

For this same opinion of Albert's is entertained by many other people respecting their own doings—a very prevalent opinion, indeed, I find it; and the answer itself, though, as aforesaid, not made with any crushing decision,[3] is nevertheless often enough imitated, with delicacy, by artists of all countries in their various dialects. Neither can it always be held an entirely modest one, as it assuredly was in the man who would sometimes estimate a piece of his unconquerable work at only the worth of a plate of fruit, or a flask of wine—would have taken even one "fig for it," kindly offered;[4] or given it royally for nothing, to show his hand[5] to a fellow-king of his own, or any other craft—as Gainsborough gave the "Boy at the Stile" for a solo on the violin.[6] An entirely modest saying, I repeat, in

[1] [*Art Journal*, March 1865. Afterwards used in *Queen of the Air*, §§ 135–142 in that book being here §§ 22–29.]

[2] [See above, § 3, p. 52.]

[3] [*Queen of the Air* reads: "though rarely made with the Nuremberger's crushing . . ."]

[4] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 449).]

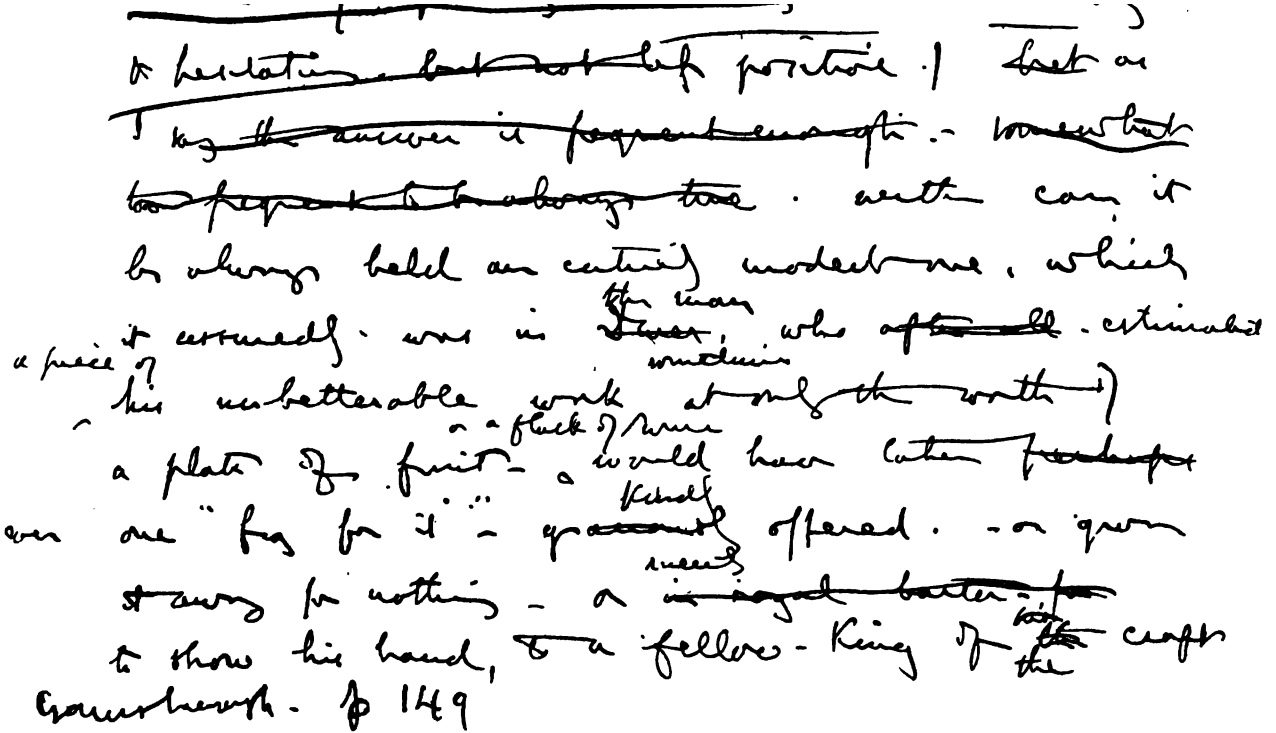
[5] [The phrase is Dürer's, used in his inscription on the drawings sent him by Raphael: see *Lectures on Art*, § 74.]

[6] ["Upon our arrival at Mr. Gainsborough's, the artist was listening to a violin. Colonel Hamilton was playing to him in so exquisite a style, that Gainsborough

"Sir, It cannot be better done".

We will ~~return~~ fall back, with the readers permission
~~to this~~ little whether on this comfortable saying of Albert Dürer's - in order
to ~~come~~ find out, if we may - what Modesty
is - which I think we need to ~~find~~ know before
going farther - ~~that~~ by embroidery, being among the whitest and softest
threads in Iglaia's Cestus.

Now: ~~For~~ this same opinion of Albert is entertained by many other
people respecting ~~persons~~ of their own ~~works~~ doings. - a very prevalent
opinion indeed - ~~I have found it~~ and the answer itself - though - as we said not made with crushing decision
~~on sounding~~ ~~delicately for inner convictions~~ itself
~~for opinion~~. ~~and have had the answer~~ itself is made
~~to~~ often enough ~~enough~~ intimated by artists of all countries
by signs, or in their - comm ~~perhaps~~ ~~articulately~~.
* in various dialects ... ~~often~~ ~~when quite~~
~~articulate~~. ~~perhaps~~ in ~~Bavaria~~ Teutonic - ~~&~~ (the English
manner of expressing it - being more clumsy



A Page of the MS. of "The Cestus of Aglaia" (§ 22)

CITY OF
CLEVELAND

him—not always in us. For Modesty is "the measuring virtue," the virtue of *modes* or limits. She is, indeed, said to be only the third or youngest of the children of the cardinal virtue, Temperance; and apt to be despised, being more given to arithmetic, and other vulgar studies (Cinderella-like) than her elder sisters:[1] but she is useful in the household, and arrives at great results with her yard-measure and slate-pencil—a pretty little Marchande des Modes, cutting her dress always according to the silk (if this be the proper feminine reading of "coat according to the cloth"), so that, consulting with her carefully of a morning, men get to know not only their income, but their inbeing—to know *themselves*, that is, in a gauger's manner, round, and up and down—surface and contents; what is in them, and what may be got out of them; and, in fine, their entire canon of weight and capacity.[2] That yard-measure of Modesty's, lent to those who will use it, is a curious musical reed, and will go round and round waists that are slender enough, with latent melody in every joint of it, the dark root only being soundless, moist from the wave wherein

> "Null' altra pianta che facesse fronda
> O indurasse, puote aver vita." *

But when the little sister herself takes it in hand, to measure things outside of us with, the joints shoot out in an amazing manner: the four-square walls even of celestial

* *Purgatorio*, i. 103.[3]

exclaimed, 'Now, my dear Colonel, if you will but go on, I will give you that picture of the boy at the stile, which you have so often wished to purchase of me.' As Gainsborough's versatile fancy was at this time devoted to music, his attention was so riveted to the tones of the violin, that for nearly half-an-hour he was motionless; after which, the Colonel requested that a hackney-coach might be sent for, wherein he carried off the picture" (*Nollekens and his Times*, by J. T. Smith, 1828, vol. i. p. 184). The incident is also mentioned in Fulcher's *Life of Gainsborough*, 1856, p. 149.]

[1] [The MS. reads: ". . . than her two sisters, Continentia and Clementia, who are given to talking about themselves; but she is highly useful . . ." For the systems of the virtues in various writers, see Vol. X. pp. 371 *seq.*]

[2] [For modesty as giving a man a just estimate of his capacity, see Vol. XVI. p. 156 *n.*]

[3] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 290–291), where Ruskin translates the passage.]

cities being measurable enough by that reed;[1] and the way pointed to them, though only to be followed, or even seen, in the dim starlight shed down from worlds amidst which there is no name of Measure any more, though the reality of it always. For, indeed, to all true modesty the necessary business is not inlook, but outlook, and especially *up*look: it is only her sister, Shamefacedness, who is known by the drooping lashes—Modesty, quite otherwise, by her large eyes full of wonder; for she never contemns herself, nor is ashamed of herself, but forgets herself—at least until she has done something worth memory. It is easy to peep and potter about one's own deficiencies in a quiet immodest discontent; but Modesty is so pleased with other people's doings, that she has no leisure to lament her own: and thus, knowing the fresh feeling of contentment, unstained with thought of self, she does not fear being pleased, when there is cause, with her own rightness, as with another's, saying calmly, "Be it mine, or yours, or whose else's it may, it is no matter;—this also is well." But the right to say such a thing depends on continual reverence, and manifold sense of failure. If you have known yourself to have failed, you may trust, when it comes, the strange consciousness of success; if you have faithfully loved the noble work of others, you need not fear to speak with respect of things duly done, of your own.

28. But the principal good that comes of art's being followed in this reverent feeling is vitally manifest in the associative conditions of it. Men who know their place can take it and keep it, be it low or high, contentedly and firmly, neither yielding nor grasping; and the harmony of hand and thought follows, rendering all great deeds of art possible—deeds in which the souls of men meet like the jewels in the windows of Aladdin's palace,[2] the little gems and the large all equally pure, needing no cement but the fitting of facets; while the associative work of immodest men is all jointless, and astir with wormy ambition; putridly

[1] [See Revelation xxi. 15.]
[2] [See Vol. IX. pp. 307, 455.]

dissolute, and for ever on the crawl: so that if it come together for a time, it can only be by metamorphosis through flash of volcanic fire out of the vale of Siddim,[1] vitrifying the clay of it, and fastening the slime, only to end in wilder scattering; according to the fate of those oldest, mightiest, immodestest of builders, of whom it is told in scorn, "They had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar."

24. The first function of Modesty, then, being this recognition of place, her second is the recognition of law, and delight in it, for the sake of law itself, whether her part be to assert it, or obey. For as it belongs to all immodesty to defy or deny law, and assert privilege and licence according to its own pleasure (it being therefore rightly called "in*solent*," that is, "custom-breaking," violating some usual and appointed order to attain for itself greater forwardness or power), so it is the habit of all modesty to love the constancy and "*solem*nity,"[2] or, literally, "accustomedness," of law, seeking first what are the solemn, appointed, inviolable customs and general orders of nature, and of the Master of nature, touching the matter in hand; and striving to put itself, as habitually and inviolably, in compliance with them. Out of which habit,[3] once established, arises what is rightly called "conscience," not "science" merely, but "with-science," a science "with

[1] [Genesis xiv.; and xi. 3.]

[2] [On the derivation of this word, see *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1871, § 8 (Vol. XVIII. p. 37 *n.*).]

[3] [The MS. reads:—

"Out of which habit, once established, there comes what is rightly called the Law in the heart, or 'Conscience,' not 'Science' merely, but 'With, or Con-science,' a science with us, and with all creation too, which only modest creatures can have, all the members of it, little or mighty, witnessing together with us in their work and their happy συνειδησις ὁτι καλὸν—'consciousness that it is good': the bee being also profoundly of that opinion, assenting with her low murmur in its ancient unison; and the [lark] who—

"'blest above all kinds—supremely skilled
Restless with fixed to balance, high with low,
May leave the halcyon free her hopes to build
On such forbearance as the deep may show;'

and the swallow, in the chattering but modestly upside-down Babel of hers, under the roof, with its unvolcanic slime for mortar; and the two ants who

us," such as only modest creatures can have — with or within them — and within all creation besides, every member of it, strong or weak, witnessing together, and joining in the happy consciousness that each one's work is good: the bee also being profoundly of that opinion; and the lark; and the swallow, in that noisy, but modestly upside-down Babel of hers, under the eaves, with its unvolcanic slime for mortar; and the two ants who are asking of each other at the turn of that little ant's-foot-worn path through the moss, "lor via e lor fortuna";[1] and the builders also, who built yonder pile of cloud-marble in the west, and the gilder who gilded it, and is gone down behind it.

25. But I think we shall better understand what we ought of the nature of Modesty, and of her opposite, by taking a simple instance of both, in the practice of that art of music which the wisest have agreed in thinking the first element of education;[2] only I must ask the reader's patience with me through a parenthesis.

Among the foremost men whose power has had to assert itself, though with conquest, yet with countless loss, through peculiarly English disadvantages of circumstance, of which I spoke in the prefatory chapter,[3] are assuredly to be ranked together, both for honour and for mourning, Thomas Bewick and George Cruikshank.[4] There is,

are inquiring of each other on that little path of theirs through the moss, 'lor via e lor fortuna'; and the builders also who built yonder pile of cloud-marble in the west, and the Gilder who gilded it, and is gone."

For the Greek phrase, see above, p. 53. The lines on the lark are adapted from Wordsworth's *A Morning Exercise* ("Hail, blest above all kinds . . . Thou leav'st . . ."). For the Gilder, the Sun who rejoiceth to run his course, see Psalms xix. 5. For the bees, compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 51, where Ruskin cites Shakespeare's description of "the singing masons building roofs of gold."]

[1] [*Purgatorio*, xxvi. 36:—

"E'en so the emmets, 'mid their dusky troops,
Peer closely one at other, to spy out
Their mutual road perchance, and how they thrive."]

[2] [See above, § 8, p. 60. And for Plato on music, see *Munera Pulveris*, § 102 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 227), and *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 73, 82, and 83.]

[3] [See above, pp. 54–57.]

[4] [The MS. has: "the rustic faithfulness of Bewick and—I will undertake fully to justify these following words, if the reader starts at them—the grave and terrible earnestness of George Cruikshank."]

however, less cause for regret in the instance of Bewick.[1] We may understand that it was well for us, once, to see what an entirely powerful painter's genius, and an entirely keen and true man's temper, could achieve together, unhelped, but also unharmed, among the black banks and wolds of Tyne. But the genius of Cruikshank has been cast away in an utterly ghastly and lamentable manner: his superb line-work, worthy of any class of subject, and his powers of conception and composition, of which I cannot venture to estimate the range in their degraded application, having been condemned, by his fate, to be spent either in rude jesting, or in vain war with conditions of vice too low alike for record or rebuke, among the dregs of the British populace.[2] Yet perhaps I am wrong in regretting even this: it may be an appointed lesson for futurity, that the art of the best English etcher in the nineteenth century, spent on illustrations of the lives of burglars and drunkards, should one day be seen in museums beneath Greek vases fretted with drawings of the wars of Troy, or side by side with Dürer's "Knight and Death."[3]

26. Be that as it may, I am at present glad to be able to refer to one of these perpetuations, by his strong hand, of such human character as our faultless British constitution occasionally produces, in out-of-the-way corners. It is

[1] [For earlier references to Bewick, see Vol. XIII. p. 435; Vol. XIV. pp. 361, 392, 401–402, 494; and Vol. XV. pp. 223, 374, 410. For later comments on his life and work, see *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 200, 226, 227. See also below, p. 155.]

[2] [Ruskin refers to the turning-point in the life and work of Cruikshank (1792–1878), when at the age of fifty-six he published his eight plates of "The Bottle," and in the following year the eight of "The Drunkard's Children." Henceforth "he devoted himself with all the energy of his nature to the duty of advocating by his pencil and his practice the cause of total abstinence," following up his plates with a huge cartoon in 1862 of "The Worship of Bacchus." (Compare below, p. 199, *n.* 2.) The artist's new departure inspired a sonnet by Matthew Arnold ("Artist, whose hand, with horror wing'd"). Ruskin, who was a very great admirer of Cruikshank's earlier work (see, *e.g.*, the Preface to "German Popular Stories," below, p. 238), deplores elsewhere also the artist's self-devotion to social propagandism: see *Time and Tide*, § 63 (Vol. XVII. p. 370). For other and earlier references to Cruikshank, see Vol. II. p. xxxiii.; Vol. V. p. xxiii.; Vol. VI. p. 471; Vol. VII. p. 350; Vol. XIII. p. 504; Vol. XIV. p. 361; Vol. XV. pp. 204, 222–223; Vol. XVI. pp. xx., 437. For Ruskin's personal interest in the artist and kindness to him, see Vol. XVIII. p. xlix.]

[3] [See Plate D in Vol. VII. p. 310.]

among his illustrations of the Irish Rebellion,[1] and represents the pillage and destruction of a gentleman's house by the mob. They have made a heap in the drawing-room of the furniture and books, to set first fire to; and are tearing up the floor for its more easily kindled planks: the less busily-disposed meanwhile hacking round in rage, with axes, and smashing what they can with butt-ends of guns. I do not care to follow with words the ghastly truth of the picture into its detail; but the most expressive incident of the whole, and the one immediately to my purpose, is this, that one fellow has sat himself at the piano, on which, hitting down fiercely with his clenched fists, he plays, grinning, such tune as may be so producible, to which melody two of his companions, flourishing knotted sticks, dance, after their manner, on the top of the instrument.

27. I think we have in this conception as perfect an instance as we require of the lowest supposable phase of immodest or licentious art in music; the "inner consciousness of good"[2] being dim, even in the musician and his audience; and wholly unsympathized with, and unacknowledged, by the Delphian, Vestal, and all other prophetic and cosmic powers. This represented scene came into my mind suddenly, one evening a few weeks ago, in contrast with another which I was watching in its reality;[3] namely, a group of gentle school-girls, leaning over Mr. Charles Hallé as he was playing a variation on "Home, sweet Home." They had sustained with unwonted courage the glance of subdued indignation with which, having just closed a rippling melody of Sebastian Bach's, (much like what one might fancy the singing of nightingales would be if they fed on honey instead of flies,) he turned to the slight, popular air. But they had their own associations with it,

[1] [*History of the Irish Rebellion in 1798; with Memoirs of the Union, and Emmett's Insurrection in 1803.* By W. H. Maxwell. Sixth Edition. With numerous Illustrations drawn and engraved by George Cruikshank, 1864. The illustration described above is at p. 384, entitled "Rebels destroying a house and furniture."]

[2] [For *συνείδησις ὅτι καλόν*, see above, p. 53.]

[3] [At Winnington in 1863; see the letter, describing the scene, in Vol. XVIII. p. lxx.]

and besought for, and obtained it; and pressed close, at first, in vain, to see what no glance could follow, the traversing of the fingers. They soon thought no more of seeing. The wet eyes, round-open, and the little scarlet upper lips, lifted, and drawn slightly together, in passionate glow of utter wonder, became picture-like,—porcelain-like,—in motionless joy, as the sweet multitude of low notes fell in their timely infinities, like summer rain. Only La Robbia himself (nor even he, unless with tenderer use of colour than is usual in his work) could have rendered some image of that listening.[1]

28. But if the reader can give due vitality in his fancy to these two scenes, he will have in them representative types, clear enough for all future purpose, of the several agencies of debased and perfect art. And the interval may easily and continuously be filled by mediate gradations. Between the entirely immodest, unmeasured, and (in evil sense) unmannered, execution with the fist; and the entirely modest, measured, and (in the noblest sense) mannered, or moral'd execution with the finger;—between the impatient and unpractised doing, containing in itself the witness of lasting impatience and idleness through all previous life, and the patient and practised doing, containing in itself the witness of self-restraint and unwearied toil through all previous life;—between the expressed subject and sentiment of home violation, and the expressed subject[2] and sentiment of home love;—between the sympathy of audience given in irreverent and contemptuous rage, joyless as the rabidness of a dog, and the sympathy of audience given in an almost appalled humility of intense, rapturous, and yet entirely reasoning and reasonable pleasure;—between these two limits of octave, the reader will find he can class, according to its modesty, usefulness, and grace, or becomingness, all other musical art. For although purity

[1] [Ruskin is thinking no doubt of such work as Luca della Robbia's friezes of children for the Cantorie (now in the Opera del Duomo) at Florence. For criticisms on his colour, see Vol. IV. pp. 300–301 *n.*]

[2] [The words "and sentiment of home violation, and the expressed subject" (which appear in the *Art Journal* and in the first edition of *Queen of the Air*) were, to the loss of the sense of the passage, accidentally omitted in all later editions of that book.]

of purpose and fineness of execution by no means go together, degree to degree, (since fine, and indeed all but the finest, work is often spent in the most wanton purpose—as in all our modern opera—and the rudest execution is again often joined with purest purpose, as in a mother's song to her child,) still the entire accomplishment of music is only in the union of both. For the difference between that "all but" finest and "finest" is an infinite one; and besides this, however the power of the performer, once attained, may be afterwards misdirected, in slavery to popular passion or childishness, and spend itself, at its sweetest, in idle melodies, cold and ephemeral (like Michael Angelo's snow statue in the other art,[1]) or else in vicious difficulty and miserable noise—crackling of thorns under the pot[2] of public sensuality—still, the attainment of this power, and the maintenance of it, involve always in the executant some virtue or courage of high kind; the understanding of which, and of the difference between the discipline which develops it and the disorderly efforts of the amateur, it will be one of our first businesses to estimate rightly. And though not indeed by degree to degree, yet in essential relation (as of winds to waves, the one being always the true cause of the other, though they are not necessarily of equal force at the same time), we shall find vice in its varieties, with art-failure,—and virtue in its varieties, with art-success,—fall and rise together: the peasant-girl's song at her spinning-wheel, the peasant-labourer's "to the oaks and rills,"[3]—domestic music, feebly yet sensitively skilful,—music for the multitude, of beneficent, or of traitorous power,—dance-melodies, pure and orderly, or foul and frantic,—march-music, blatant in mere fever of animal pugnacity, or majestic with force of national duty and memory,—song music, reckless, sensual, sickly, slovenly, forgetful even of the foolish words it effaces with foolish noise,—or thoughtful, sacred, healthful, artful, for ever sanctifying noble thought

[1] [See *A Joy for Ever*, § 36 (Vol. XVI. p. 39).]
[2] [Ecclesiastes vii. 6.]
[3] [Milton: *Lycidas*, 186.]

with separately distinguished loveliness of belonging sound, —all these families and gradations of good or evil, however mingled, follow, in so far as they are good, one constant law of virtue (or "life-strength," which is the literal meaning of the word,[1] and its intended one, in wise men's mouths), and in so far as they are evil, are evil by outlawry and unvirtue, or death-weakness. Then, passing wholly beyond the domain of death, we may still imagine the ascendant nobleness of the art, through all the concordant life of incorrupt creatures, and a continually deeper harmony of "*puissant* words and murmurs made to bless,"[2] until we reach

> "The undisturbèd song of pure concent,
> Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne."[3]

29. And so far as the sister arts can be conceived to have place or office, their virtues are subject to a law absolutely the same as that of music, only extending its authority into more various conditions, owing to the introduction of a distinctly representative and historical power, which acts under logical as well as mathematical restrictions, and is capable of endlessly changeful fault, fallacy and defeat, as well as of endlessly manifold victory.[4] To the discernment of this law we will now address ourselves slowly, beginning with the consideration of little things and of easily definable virtues. And since Patience is the pioneer of all the others, I shall endeavour in the next paper to show how that modest virtue has been either held of no account, or else set to vilest work in our modern Art-schools; and what harm has resulted from such disdain, or such employment of her.

[1] [See *Ethics of the Dust*, § 80 (Vol. XVIII. p. 301).]
[2] [Milton: *Arcades*, 60.]
[3] [Milton: *At a Solemn Music*. With what Ruskin says here about the ethical qualities of music, compare the Rede Lecture, below, pp. 175–180.]
[4] [At this point the reprint of this passage in *Queen of the Air* (below, p. 409) ended.]

CHAPTER III[1]

[PATIENCE]

"Dame Pacience sitting there I fonde,
With facë pale, upon an hill of sonde."[2]

30. As I try to summon this vision of Chaucer's into definiteness, and as it fades before me, and reappears, like the image of Piccarda in the moon,[3] there mingles with it another;—the image of an Italian child, lying, she also, upon a hill of sand, by Eridanus' side; a vision which has never quite left me since I saw it. A girl of ten or twelve, it might be; one of the children to whom there has never been any other lesson taught than that of patience:—patience of famine and thirst; patience of heat and cold; patience of fierce word and sullen blow; patience of changeless fate and giftless time. She was lying with her arms thrown back over her head, all languid and lax, on an earth-heap by the river side (the softness of the dust being the only softness she had ever known), in the southern suburb of Turin, one golden afternoon in August, years ago.[4] She had been at play, after her fashion, with other patient children, and had thrown herself down to rest, full in the sun, like a lizard. The sand was mixed with the draggled locks of her black hair, and some of it sprinkled over her face and body, in an "ashes to ashes" kind of way; a few black

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv. pp. 101, 102, April 1865. A small portion of this chapter was read by Ruskin, at Oxford, in November 1884, as a by-lecture, during the delivery of the course on "The Pleasures of England": the lecture on Patience was reported in E. T. Cook's *Studies in Ruskin*, pp. 264–271; and see a later volume of this edition.]

[2] [Chaucer: *The Assembly of Foules*, stanza 35; quoted also in *Ethics of the Dust*, § 36 (Vol. XVIII. p. 247).]

[3] [*Paradiso*, iii. 7 *seq.*]

[4] [August 1858.]

rags about her loins, but her limbs nearly bare, and her little breasts, scarce dimpled yet,—white,—marble-like—but, as wasted marble, thin with the scorching and the rains of Time. So she lay, motionless; black and white by the shore in the sun; the yellow light flickering back upon her from the passing eddies of the river, and burning down on her from the west. So she lay, like a dead Niobid: it seemed as if the Sun-God, as he sank towards grey Viso (who stood pale in the south-west, and pyramidal as a tomb), had been wroth with Italy for numbering her children too carefully, and slain this little one. Black and white she lay, all breathless, in a sufficiently pictorial manner: the gardens of the Villa Regina gleamed beyond, graceful with laurel-grove and labyrinthine terrace;[1] and folds of purple mountain were drawn afar, for curtains round her little dusty bed.

81. Pictorial enough, I repeat; and yet I might not now have remembered her, so as to find her figure mingling, against my will, with other images, but for her manner of "revival." For one of her playmates coming near, cast some word at her which angered her; and she rose—"en ego, victa situ"[2]—she rose with a single spring, like a snake; one hardly saw the motion; and with a shriek so shrill that I put my hands upon my ears; and so uttered herself, indignant and vengeful, with words of justice,—Alecto standing by, satisfied, teaching her acute, articulate syllables, and adding her own voice to carry them thrilling through the blue laurel shadows. And having spoken, she went her way, wearily: and I passed by on the other side,[3] meditating, with such Levitical propriety as a respectable person should, on the asp-like Passion, following the sorrowful Patience; and on the way in which the saying, "Dust

[1] [For Ruskin's description of these gardens, see Vol. XVI. pp. 192–193.]

[2] [Virgil: *Æneid*, vii. 452—from the scene between the Fury Alecto and Turnus. She had appeared to the prince first in the guise of an old woman, and he had mocked at her as a mouldering eld. Whereupon she darts up and shows herself in her true guise: "Lo, I am she, worn out with mould," etc.]

[3] [Luke x. 31.]

shalt thou eat all thy days"[1] has been confusedly fulfilled, first by much provision of human dust for the meat of what Keats calls "human serpentry";[2] and last, by gathering the Consumed and Consumer into dust together, for the meat of the death spirit, or serpent Apap.[3] Neither could I, for long, get rid of the thought of this strange dust-manufacture under the mill-stones, as it were, of Death; and of the two colours of the grain, discriminate beneath, though indiscriminately cast into the hopper. For indeed some of it seems only to be made whiter for its patience, and becomes kneadable into spiced bread, where they sell in Babylonian shops "slaves, and souls of men";[4] but other some runs dark from under the mill-stones; a little sulphurous and nitrous foam being mingled in the conception of it; and is ominously stored up in magazines near river-embankments; patient enough — for the present.[5]

82. But it is provoking to me that the image of this child mingles itself now with Chaucer's; for I should like truly to know what Chaucer means by his sand-hill. Not but that this is just one of those enigmatical pieces of teaching which we have made up our minds not to be troubled with,[6] since it may evidently mean just what we like. Sometimes I would fain have it to mean the ghostly sand of the horologe of the world: and I think that the pale figure is seated on the recording heap, which rises slowly, and ebbs in giddiness, and flows again, and rises, tottering; and still she sees, falling beside her, the never-ending stream of phantom sand. Sometimes I like to think

[1] [Genesis iii. 14.]
[2] [*Endymion*, i. 821.]
[3] [See *Queen of the Air*, § 72; below, p. 366.]
[4] [Revelation xviii. 3, 11, 13 (the chapter describing the fall of Babylon): "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. . . . And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more. . . . And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments . . . and slaves, and souls of men."]
[5] [The reference is to the Penitentiary then standing at Millbank (see below, p. 227).]
[6] [See above, § 12, p. 63.]

that she is seated on the sand because she is herself the Spirit of Staying, and victor over all things that pass and change;—quicksand of the desert in moving pillar; quicksand of the sea in moving floor; roofless all, and unabiding, but she abiding;—to herself, her home. And sometimes I think, though I do not like to think (neither did Chaucer mean this, for he always meant the lovely thing first, not the low one), that she is seated on her sand-heap as the only treasure to be gained by human toil;[1] and that the little ant-hill, where the best of us creep to and fro, bears to angelic eyes, in the patientest gathering of its galleries, only the aspect of a little heap of dust; while for the worst of us, the heap, still lower by the levelling of those winged surveyors, is high enough, nevertheless, to overhang, and at last to close in judgment, on the seventh day, over the journeyers to the fortunate Islands; while to their dying eyes, through the mirage, "the city sparkles like a grain of salt."[2]

88. But of course it does not in the least matter what it means. All that matters specially to us in Chaucer's vision, is that, next to Patience (as the reader will find by looking at the context in the *Assembly of Foules*), were "Beheste" and "Art";—Promise, that is, and Art: and that, although these visionary powers are here waiting only in one of the outer courts of Love, and the intended patience is here only the long-suffering of love; and the intended beheste, its promise; and the intended art, its cunning,—the same powers companion each other necessarily in the courts and ante-chambers of every triumphal home of man. I say triumphal home, for, indeed, triumphal *arches* which you pass under, are but foolish things, and may be nailed together any day, out of pasteboard and filched laurel; but triumphal *doors*, which you can enter in at, with living laurel crowning the Lares, are not

[1] [Compare the title *Munera Pulveris:* see Vol. XVII. p. lxvi.]

[2] [Tennyson: the last line of "Will." For Ruskin's admiration of the line, see Vol. II. p. xxviii. *n.*]

so easy of access: and outside of them waits always this sad portress, Patience; that is to say, the submission to the eternal laws of Pain and Time, and acceptance of them as inevitable, smiling at the grief.[1] So much pains you shall take—so much time you shall wait: that is the Law. Understand it, honour it; with peace of heart accept the pain, and attend the hours; and as the husbandman in his waiting, you shall see, first the blade, and then the ear, and then the laughing of the valleys.[2] But refuse the Law, and seek to do your work in your own time, or by any serpentine way to evade the pain, and you shall have no harvest—nothing but apples of Sodom:[3] dust shall be your meat, and dust in your throat—there is no singing in such harvest time.

34. And this is true for all things, little and great. There is a time and a way in which they can be done: none shorter—none smoother. For all noble things, the time is long and the way rude. You may fret and fume as you will; for every start and struggle of impatience there shall be so much attendant failure; if impatience become a habit, nothing but failure: until on the path you have chosen for your better swiftness, rather than the honest flinty one, there shall follow you, fast at hand, instead of Beheste and Art for companions, those two wicked hags,

> "With hoary locks all loose, and visage grim;
> Their feet unshod, their bodies wrapt in rags,
> And both as swift on foot as chased stags;
> And yet the one her other legge had lame,
> Which with a staff all full of little snags
> She did support, and Impotence her name:
> But th' other was Impatience, armed with raging flame."[4]

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[1] [*Twelfth Night*, ii. 4, line 116:—

> "like Patience on a monument,
> Smiling at grief"—

quoted also in *Ethics of the Dust*, § 36 (Vol. XVIII. p. 247), and earlier, in Vol. I. p. 434. It is interesting to see how the young man there quotes it, laughing at the image, and how differently he used the passage in later years.]

[2] [Mark iv. 28; Psalms lxv. 14 (Prayer-book Version).]

[3] [Compare *Unto this Last*, § 81 (Vol. XVII. p. 110).]

[4] [Spenser: *Faerie Queene*, ii. 11, 23. Compare Vol. X. p. 391.]

"*Raging* flame," note; unserviceable;—flame of the black grain.[1] But the fire which Patience carries in her hand is that truly stolen from Heaven,[2] in the *pith* of the rod—fire of the slow match; persistent Fire like it also in her own body,—fire in the marrow; unquenchable incense of life: though it may seem to the bystanders that there is no breath in her, and she holds herself like a statue, as Hermione, "the statue lady," or Griselda, "the stone lady";[3] unless indeed one looks close for the glance *forward*, in the eyes, which distinguishes such pillars from the pillars, not of flesh, but of salt, whose eyes are set backwards.[4]

35. I cannot get to my work in this paper, somehow; the web of these old enigmas entangles me again and again.[5]

[1] [See above, § 31, for the dark grain of crime.]

[2] [The reference is to the fire which Prometheus stole from Heaven at the end of a rod.]

[3] [For Hermione, "pillar-like," see *Munera Pulveris*, § 134 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 257); for Griselda, see next page.]

[4] [Genesis xix. 26.]

[5] [This section (§ 35) is a particularly characteristic example of the allusive, and somewhat esoteric, style in which much of *The Cestus of Aglaia* is written; see the author's description of this style, in which "all that comes into my head is said for my own pleasure" (*Queen of the Air*, § 134; below, p. 408). *Gris*elda brings into his head memories of the Tosa (or Toccia) falls beneath the Gries glacier (he may have visited the falls from Domo d'Ossola in 1845); then he passes to think of the long oppression of Raetia under petty tyrants (of which a record remains in the many ruined feudal castles which stud that part of Switzerland). Their rule was at last shaken off by the formation of the Grison Confederation, in which one of the constituents was the Grey League (Graue Bund): hence the name of the present canton, Graubünden (*Fr.* Grisons). The name (though possibly referring to the several counts, Grafen, whom the League comprised) is popularly derived from the grey home-spun coats of those by whom it was formed: see the passage quoted by Ruskin in Vol. XIII. p. 516. The thought of the Grison country brings to his mind its central defile, the Via Mala, the grandeur of which had impressed him so many years ago (see *Præterita*, i. § 136; ii. § 131), and he doubts incidentally whether the men of Graubünden have hewn their way in the world so decisively as the foaming river. Then the colour of Grison Grey recalls to him at one moment Tennyson's Enid ("Earl, entreat her by my love, Albeit I give no reason but my wish, That she ride with me in her faded silk"—*The Marriage of Geraint*); and, at the next, Turner's brilliant water-colour sketches on grey paper (see Vol. XIII. p. 385), which allusion, lastly, leads him to a lament at the little interest taken in the sketches (see below, § 104 *n.*, p. 148), then shown at the South Kensington Museum (see Vol. XIII. p. xxxvi.).

Then in the next section Ruskin carries a little further his allusion to Tennyson:—

> "And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,
> Geraint had longing in him evermore
> To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,
> That crost the trencher as she laid it down."

He compares the arts to princesses thus set to menial service, and so gets "disentangled," and returns to his main subject.]

That rough syllable which begins the name of Griselda, "Gries," "the stone"; the roar of the long fall of the Toccia seems to mix with the sound of it, bringing thoughts of the great Alpine patience; mute snow wreathed by grey rock, till avalanche time comes—patience of mute tormented races till the time of the Grey league came; at last impatient. (Not that, hitherto, it has hewn its way to much: the Rhine-foam of the Via Mala seeming to have done its work better.) But it is a noble colour that Grison Grey; —dawn colour—graceful for a faded silk to ride in, and wonderful, in paper, for getting a glow upon, if you begin wisely, as you may some day perhaps see by those Turner sketches at Kensington, if ever anybody can see them.

36. But we *will* get to work now; the work being to understand, if we may, what tender creatures are indeed riding with us, the British public, in faded silk, and handing our plates for us with tender little thumbs,[1] and never wearing, or doing, anything else (not always having much to put on their own plates). The loveliest arts, the arts of noblest descent, have been long doing this for us, and are still, and we have no idea of their being Princesses, but keep them ill-entreated and enslaved: vociferous as we are against Black slavery, while we are gladly acceptant of Grey; and fain to keep Aglaia and her sisters—Urania and hers,—serving us in faded silk, and taken for kitchen-wenches. We are mad Sanchos, not mad Quixotes: our eyes enchant *Down*wards.

37. For one instance only: has the reader ever reflected on the patience, and deliberate subtlety, and unostentatious will, involved in the ordinary process of steel engraving; that process of which engravers themselves now with doleful voices deplore the decline, and with sorrowful hearts expect the extinction, after their own days?

By the way—my friends of the field of steel,—you need fear nothing of the kind. What there is of mechanical in your work; of habitual and thoughtless, of vulgar or servile

[1] [Quoted also in Vol. XVII. p. 523.]

—for that, indeed, the time has come; the sun will burn it up for you, very ruthlessly; but what there is of human liberty, and of sanguine life, in finger and fancy, is kindred of the sun, and quite inextinguishable by him. He is the very last of divinities who would wish to extinguish it. With his red right hand, though full of lightning coruscation, he will faithfully and tenderly clasp yours, warm blooded; you will see the vermilion in the flesh-shadows all the clearer; but your hand will not be withered. I tell you—(dogmatically, if you like to call it so, knowing it well[1])—a square inch of man's engraving is worth all the photographs that ever were dipped in acid (or left half-washed afterwards, which is saying much[2])—only it must be man's engraving; not machine's engraving. You have founded a school on patience and labour — only. That school must soon be extinct. You will have to found one on thought, which is Phœnician in immortality and fears no fire. Believe me, photography can do against line engraving just what Madame Tussaud's wax-work can do against sculpture. That, and no more.[3] You are too timid in this matter; you are like Isaac in that picture of Mr. Schnorr's in the last number of this Journal, and with Teutonically metaphysical precaution, shade your eyes from the sun with your back to it.[4] Take courage; turn your eyes to it in an aquiline manner; put more sunshine on your steel, and less burr; and leave the photographers to their Phœbus of Magnesium wire.[5]

[1] [See above, § 9, p. 60. So in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 6, Ruskin claims that his so-called "arrogance" only consists in saying plainly what he has ascertained certainly.]

[2] [Photographers will note in this allusion to imperfect washing the touch of practical acquaintance with the pursuit; as was the case. For Ruskin's early interest in photography, see Vol. III. p. 210.]

[3] [For Ruskin's views on the uses and limitations of photography, and its relation to engraving, see the passages noted at Vol. III. pp. 169, 210 *n.*; and compare Vol. XIV. pp. 358–359; Vol. XV. p. 353; Vol. VII. pp. 4, 13; Vol. IX. p. xlix.]

[4] [The *Art Journal* for March contained a notice of "German Painters of the Modern School: Schadow, Vert, and Schnorr." On p. 71 was an engraving of "The Meeting of Rebecca and Isaac" by Schnorr; Isaac is seen shading his eyes from the sun, which is setting *behind* him. Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, 1764–1841.]

[5] [For another reference to magnesium light, at this time beginning to attract attention, see *Sesame and Lilies* (Vol. XVIII. p. 106 *n.*).]

88. Not that I mean to speak disrespectfully of magnesium. I honour it to its utmost fiery particle[1] (though I think the soul a fierier one); and I wish the said magnesium all comfort and triumph; nightly-lodging in light-houses, and utter victory over coal gas. Could Titian but have known what the gnomes who built his dolomite crags above Cadore had mixed in the make of them,—and that one day—one night, I mean—his blue distances would still be seen pure blue, by light got out of his own mountains!

Light out of limestone—colour out of coal—and white wings out of hot water![2] It is a great age this of ours, for traction and extraction, if it only knew what to extract from itself, or where to drag itself to!

89. But in the meantime I want the public to admire this patience of yours, while they have it, and to understand what it has cost to give them even this, which has to pass away. We will not take instance in figure engraving, of which the complex skill and textural gradation by dot and chequer must be wholly incomprehensible to amateurs; but we will take a piece of average landscape engraving, such as is sent out of any good workshop—the master who puts his name at the bottom of the plate being of course responsible only for the general method, for the sufficient skill of subordinate hands, and for the few finishing touches if necessary. We will take, for example, the plate of Turner's "Mercury and Argus," engraved in this Journal.[3]

40. I suppose most people, looking at such a plate, fancy it is produced by some simple mechanical artifice, which is to drawing only what printing is to writing. They conclude, at all events,[4] that there is something

[1] [Byron: *Don Juan*, xi. 59: "the mind, that very fiery particle."]

[2] [The use of aniline dyes (produced from the distillation of coal tar) was comparatively new when Ruskin wrote, the first patent having been taken out in 1858. The next reference appears to be to the substitution of steam navigation for the white wings of sails.]

[3] [At p. 16 of vol. iv. (1865). Engraved by J. T. Willmore. A photogravure of the picture is Plate 14 in Vol. III. of this edition.]

[4] [The rest of this and the whole of the succeeding paragraph were reprinted in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 115 (beginning "You cannot really think that there is something . . ."), and the first paragraph of § 116.]

complacent, sympathetic, and helpful in the nature of steel; so that while a pen-and-ink sketch may always be considered an achievement proving cleverness in the sketcher, a sketch on steel comes out by mere favour of the indulgent metal: or that the plate is woven like a piece of pattern silk, and the pattern is developed by pasteboard cards punched full of holes. Not so. Look close at[1] that engraving—imagine it to be a drawing in pen and ink, and yourself required similarly to produce its parallel! True, the steel point has the one advantage of not blotting, but it has tenfold or twentyfold disadvantage, in that you cannot slur, nor efface, except in a very resolute and laborious way, nor play with it, nor even see what you are doing with it at the moment, far less the effect that is to be. You must *feel* what you are doing with it, and know precisely what you have got to do; how deep—how broad—how far apart—your lines must be, etc. and etc. (a couple of lines of etc.'s would not be enough to imply all you must know). But suppose the plate *were* only a pen drawing: take your pen—your finest—and just try to copy the leaves that entangle the nearest cow's head and the head itself; remembering always that the kind of work required here is mere child's play compared to that of fine figure engraving. Nevertheless, take a strong magnifying glass to this—count the dots and lines that gradate the nostrils and the edges of the facial bone; notice how the light is left on the top of the head by the stopping at its outline of the coarse touches which form the shadows under the leaves; examine it well, and then—I humbly ask of you—try to do a piece of it yourself! You clever sketcher—you young lady or gentleman of genius—you eye-glassed dilettante—you current writer of criticism royally plural,—I beseech you—do it yourself; do the merely etched outline yourself, if no more. Look you,—you hold your etching

[1] [In *Ariadne Florentina*, § 115, this passage reads: "Look close at this engraving"—*i.e.*, Miller's engraving of Turner's "Grand Canal"—"or take a simpler one, Turner's 'Mercury and Argus,'—and imagine . . ."]

needle this way, as you would a pencil, nearly; and then,—you scratch with it! it is as easy as lying.[1] Or if you think that too difficult, take an easier piece;—take either of the light sprays of foliage that rise against the fortress on the right, put your glass over them—look how their fine outline is first drawn, leaf by leaf; then how the distant rock is put in between, with broken lines, mostly stopping before they touch the leaf outline, and—again, I pray you, do it yourself; if not on that scale, on a larger. Go on into the hollows of the distant rock—traverse its thickets—number its towers[2]—count how many lines there are in a laurel bush—in an arch—in a casement: some hundred and fifty, or two hundred, deliberately drawn lines, you will find, in every square quarter of an inch;—say *three thousand to the inch*,—each with skilful intent put in its place! and then consider what the ordinary sketcher's work must appear to the men who have been trained to this!

41. "But might not more have been done by three thousand lines to a square inch?" you will perhaps ask. Well, possibly. It may be with lines as with soldiers: three hundred, knowing their work thoroughly, may be stronger than three thousand less sure of their game. We shall have to press close home this question about numbers and purpose presently;[3]—it is not the question now. Supposing certain results required,—atmospheric effects, surface textures, transparencies of shade, confusions of light,—more could *not* be done with less. There are engravings of this modern school, of which, with respect to their particular aim, it may be said, most truly, they "*cannot* be better done."[4]

42. Whether an engraving should aim at effects of atmosphere, may be disputable (just as also whether a

[1] [*Hamlet*, iii. 2.]
[2] [Psalms xlviii. 11.]
[3] [See the next chapter.]
[4] [See above, pp. 52, 72.]

sculptor should aim at effects of perspective); but I do not raise these points to-day. Admit the aim—let us note the patience; nor this in engraving only. I have taken an engraving for my instance, but I might have taken any form of Art. I call upon all good artists, painters, sculptors, metal-workers, to bear witness with me in what I now tell the public in their name,—that the same Fortitude, the same deliberation, the same perseverance in resolute act—is needed to do *anything* in Art that is worthy. And why is it, you workmen, that you are silent always concerning your toil; and mock at us in your hearts, within that shrine at Eleusis, to the gate of which you have hewn your way through so deadly thickets of thorn; and leave us, foolish children, outside, in our conceited thinking either that we can enter it in play, or that we are grander for not entering? Far more earnestly is it to be asked, why do you *stoop* to us as you mock us? If your secrecy were a noble one,—if, in that incommunicant contempt, you wrought your own work with majesty, whether we would receive it or not, it were kindly, though ungraciously, done; but now you make yourselves our toys, and do our childish will in servile silence. If engraving were to come to an end this day, and no guided point should press metal more, do you think it would be in a blaze of glory that your art would expire?—that those plates in the annuals, and black proofs in broad shop windows, are of a nobly monumental character,—"chalybe perennius?"[1] I am afraid your patience has been too much like yonder poor Italian child's; and over that genius of yours, low laid by the Matin shore, if it expired so, the lament for Archytas would have to be sung again;—"pulveris exigui—munera."[2] Suppose you were to shake off the dust again! cleanse your wings, like the morning

[1] [Ruskin here combines Horace (*Odes*, iii. 30, 1: "Exegi monumentum ære *perennius*") with Propertius (i. 16, 30: "ferro durior et *chalybe*").]

[2] [Horace: *Odes*, i. 28: for a note on this passage (whence comes the title *Munera Pulveris*), see Introduction to Vol. XVII. p. lxv.]

bees on that Matin promontory;[1] rise, in noble *im*patience, for there is such a thing: the Impatience of the Fourth Cornice.

"Cui buon voler, e giusto amor cavalca."[2]

Shall we try, together, to think over the meaning of that Haste, when the May mornings come?

[1] [Again a reference to Horace; see *Odes*, iv. 2, 27, where the poet describes his work: "Ego apis Matinæ more . . . operosa parvus Carmina fingo." The passage is quoted also in *Queen of the Air*, § 48 (below, p. 349), and *Val d'Arno*, § 221.]

[2] [*Purgatorio*, xviii. 96. On the fourth cornice the sin of indifference is punished; but "hearty zeal to serve reanimates celestial grace," and the poet sees an eager multitude who now "by good will and righteous love are ridden."]

CHAPTER IV[1]

[HASTE]

43. It is a wild March day,—the 20th; and very probably due course of English Spring will bring as wild a May-day by the time this writing meets any one's eyes; but at all events, as yet the days are rough, and as I look out of my fitfully lighted window into the garden,[2] everything seems in a singular hurry. The dead leaves; and yonder two living ones, on the same stalk, tumbling over and over each other on the lawn, like a quaint mechanical toy; and the fallen sticks from the rooks' nests, and the twisted straws out of the stable-yard—all going one way, in the hastiest manner! The puffs of steam, moreover, which pass under the wooded hills where what used to be my sweetest field-walk ends now, prematurely, in an abyss of blue clay; and which signify, in their silvery expiring between the successive trunks of wintry trees, that some human beings, thereabouts, are in a hurry as well as the sticks and straws, and, having fastened themselves to the tail of a manageable breeze, are being blown down to Folkestone.

44. In the general effect of these various passages and passengers, as seen from my quiet room, they look all very much alike. One begins seriously to question with oneself whether those passengers by the Folkestone train are in truth one whit more in a hurry than the dead leaves. The difference consists, of course, in the said passengers knowing where they are going to, and why; and having resolved to go there—which, indeed, as far as Folkestone,

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv. pp. 129–130. May 1865.]
[2] [At Denmark Hill.]

may, perhaps, properly distinguish them from the leaves: but will it distinguish them any farther? Do many of them know what they are going to Folkestone for?—what they are going anywhere for? and where, at last, by sum of all the days' journeys, of which this glittering transit is one, they are going for peace? For if they know not this, certainly they are no more making haste than the straws are. Perhaps swiftly going the wrong way; more likely going no way—any way, as the winds and their own wills, wilder than the winds, dictate; to find themselves at last at the end which would have come to them quickly enough without their seeking.

45. And, indeed, this is a very preliminary question to all measurement of the rate of going, this "where to?" or, even before that, "are we going on at all?"[1]—"getting on" (as the world says) on any road whatever? Most men's eyes are so fixed on the mere swirl of the wheel of their fortunes, and their souls so vexed at the reversed cadences of it when they come, that they forget to ask if the curve they have been carried through on its circumference was circular or cycloidal; whether they have been bound to the ups and downs of a mill-wheel or of a chariot-wheel.

That phrase, of "getting on," so perpetually on our lips[2] (as indeed it should be), do any of us take it to our hearts, and seriously ask where we can get on *to?* That instinct of hurry has surely good grounds. It is all very well for lazy and nervous people (like myself for instance) to retreat into tubs, and holes, and corners, anywhere out of the dust, and wonder within ourselves, "what all the fuss can be about?" The fussy people might have the best of it, if they know their end. Suppose they were to answer this March or May morning thus:—"Not bestir ourselves, indeed! and the spring sun up these four hours!—and this first of May, 1865, never to come back again; and of Firsts of May in perspective, supposing ourselves to be 'nel mezzo

[1] [Compare Vol. XI. p. 258.]
[2] [See Vol. XVIII. pp. 448, 452–453.]

del cammin,'[1] perhaps some twenty or twenty-five to be, not without presumption, hoped for, and by no means calculated upon. Say, twenty of them, with their following groups of summer days; and though they may be long, one cannot make much more than sixteen hours a-piece out of them, poor sleepy wretches that we are; for even if we get up at four, we must go to bed while the red yet stays from the sunset: and half the time we are awake, we must be lying among haycocks, or playing at something, if we are wise; not to speak of eating, and previously earning whereof to eat, which takes time: and then, how much of us and of our day will be left for getting on? Shall we have a seventh, or even a tithe, of our twenty-four hours?—two hours and twenty-four minutes clear, a day, or, roughly, a thousand hours a year, and (violently presuming on fortune, as we said) twenty years of working life: twenty thousand hours to get on in, altogether?[2] Many men would think it hard to be limited to an utmost twenty thousand pounds for their fortunes, but here is a sterner limitation; the Pactolus of time, sand, and gold together, would, with such a fortune, count us a pound an hour, through our real and serviceable life. If this time capital would reproduce itself! and for our twenty thousand hours we could get some rate of interest, if well spent? At all events, we will do something with them; not lie moping out of the way of the dust, as you do."

46. A sufficient answer, indeed; yet, friends, if you would *make* a little less dust, perhaps we should all see our way better. But I am ready to take the road with you, if you mean it so seriously—only let us at least consider where we are now, at starting.

Here, on a little spinning, askew-axised thing we call a planet—(impertinently enough, since we are far more planetary ourselves). A round, rusty, rough little metallic

[1] [*Inferno*, i. 1: compare Vol. X. p. 400.]

[2] [Ruskin himself was used to number his days in this way; see the note on his diary in Vol. VII. p. xxiii.]

ball—very hard to live upon; most of it much too hot or too cold: a couple of narrow habitable belts about it, which, to wandering spirits, must look like the places where it has got damp, and green-mouldy, with accompanying small activities of animal life in the midst of the lichen. Explosive gases, seemingly, inside it, and possibilities of very sudden dispersion.

47. This is where we are; and round about us, there seem to be more of such balls, variously heated and chilled, ringed and mooned, moved and comforted; the whole giddy group of us forming an atom in a milky mist, itself another atom in a shoreless phosphorescent sea of such Volvoces and Medusae.[1]

Whereupon, I presume, one would first ask, have we any chance of getting off this ball of ours, and getting on to one of those finer ones? Wise people say we have, and that it is very wicked to think otherwise. So we will think no otherwise; but, with their permission, think nothing about the matter now, since it is certain that the more we make of our little rusty world, such as it is, the more chance we have of being one day promoted into a merrier one.

48. And even on this rusty and mouldy Earth, there appear to be things which may be seen with pleasure, and things which might be done with advantage. The stones of it have strange shapes; the plants and the beasts of it strange ways. Its air is coinable into wonderful sounds; its light into manifold colours: the trees of it bring forth pippins, and the fields cheese (though both of these[2] may be, in a finer sense, "to come"). There are bright eyes upon it which reflect the light of other eyes quite singularly; and foolish feelings to be cherished upon it; and gladdenings

[1] [Ruskin is thinking here of the passage from Michelet's *L'Insecte*, which he quoted in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 232): "The navigator, who at night sees the ocean shimmering with lustre and wreathing garlands of fire, is at first diverted by the spectacle . . . yet all this is but a dance of imperceptible animalcules."]

[2] [That is, the trees and the fields; when "the redeemed shall walk there" (Isaiah xxxv. 9).]

of dust by neighbour dust, not easily explained, but pleasant, and which take time to win. One would like to know something of all this, I suppose?—to divide one's score of thousand hours as shrewdly as might be. Ten minutes to every herb of the field is not much; yet we shall not know them all, so, before the time comes to be made grass of ourselves! Half-an-hour for every crystalline form of clay and flint, and we shall be near the need of shaping the grey flint stone that is to weigh upon our feet. And we would fain dance a measure or two before that cumber is laid upon them: there having been hitherto much piping to which we have not danced.[1] And we must leave time for loving, if we are to take Marmontel's wise peasant's word for it, "*Il n'y a de bon que ça!*"[2] And if there should be fighting to do also? and weeping? and much burying? truly, we had better make haste.

49. Which means, simply, that we must lose neither strength nor moment. Hurry is not haste; but economy is, and rightness is. Whatever is rightly done stays with us, to support another right beyond, or higher up: whatever is wrongly done, vanishes; and by the blank, betrays what we would have built above. Wasting no word, no thought, no doing, we shall have speed enough; but then there is that farther question, what shall we do?—what we are fittest (worthiest, that is) to do, and what is best worth doing? Note that word "worthy," both of the man and the thing, for the two dignities go together. Is *it* worth the pains? Are we worth the task? The dignity of a man depends wholly upon this harmony. If his task is above him, he will be undignified in failure; if he is above it, he will be undignified in success. His own composure and nobleness must be according to the composure of his thought to his toil.

50. As I was dreaming over this, my eyes fell by chance

[1] [Matthew xi. 17.]

[2] [See *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 17, where Ruskin gives a translation of the passage in the *Contes Moraux*, where these words occur.]

on a page of my favourite thirteenth-century psalter,[1] just where two dragons, one with red legs, and another with green,—one with a blue tail on a purple ground, and the other with a rosy tail on a golden ground, follow the verse "*Quis ascendet in montem Domini*," and begin the solemn "*Qui non accepit in vano animam suam.*"[2] Who hath not lift up his soul unto vanity, we have it; and ἔλαβεν ἐπὶ ματαίῳ, the Greek (not that I know what that means accurately): broadly, they all mean, "who has not received nor given his soul in vain": this is the man who can make haste, even uphill, the only haste worth making; and it must be up the right hill, too: not that Corinthian Acropolis, of which, I suppose, the white spectre stood eighteen hundred feet high, in Hades, for Sisyphus to roll his fantastic stone up—image, himself, for ever of the greater part of our wise mortal work.[3]

51. Now all this time, whatever the reader may think, I have never for a moment lost sight of that original black line with which is our own special business.[4] The patience, the speed, the dignity, we can give to that, the choice to be made of subject for it, are the matters I want to get at. You think, perhaps, that an engraver's function is one of no very high dignity;—does not involve a serious choice of work. Consider a little of it. Here is a steel point, and 'tis like Job's "iron pen"[5]—and you are going to cut into steel with it, in a most deliberate way, as into the rock for ever. And this scratch or inscription of yours

[1] [The Psalter of St. Louis.]

[2] [Psalms xxiv. 3, 4: compare *Lectures on Art*, § 95, where Ruskin quotes not the Septuagint but the Vulgate.]

[3] [Here, again, Ruskin's thought is very allusive. He is thinking of the explanation which he had formed in his mind (and which he afterwards gave in *Queen of the Air*, § 29; below, p. 326) of the legend of Sisyphus, the crafty prince of Corinth, in connexion with the Corinthian Acropolis. He took Corinth as the centre, at once of the crossing currents of the winds, and of the commerce, of Greece; and thus contrasts "the right hill" (*in montem Domini*) with the hill which was to him a type of "transit, transfer, or trade, and of the apparent gain from it," which yet is in reality but empty clouds.]

[4] [See above, p. 70.]

[5] [Job xix. 23, 24: "Oh that my words . . . were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever." See below, § 53.]

will be seen of a multitude of eyes. It is not like a single picture or a single wall painting; this multipliable work will pass through thousand thousand hands, strengthen and inform innumerable souls, if it be worthy; vivify the folly of thousands if unworthy. Remember, also, it will mix in the very closest manner in domestic life. This engraving will not be gossiped over and fluttered past at private views of academies; listlessly sauntered by in corners of great galleries. Ah, no! This will hang over parlour chimney-pieces—shed down its hourly influence on children's forenoon work. This will hang in little luminous corners by sick beds; mix with flickering dreams by candlelight, and catch the first rays from the window's "glimmering square."[1] You had better put something good into it! I do not know a more solemn field of labour than that *champ d'acier*.[2] From a pulpit, perhaps a man can only reach one or two people, for that time,—even your book, once carelessly read, probably goes into a book-case catacomb, and is thought of no more. But this; taking the eye unawares again and again, and always again: persisting and inevitable! where will you look for a chance of saying something nobly, if it is not here?

52. And the choice is peculiarly free; to you of all men most free. An artist, at first invention, cannot always choose what shall come into his mind, nor know what it will eventually turn into. But you, professed copyists, unless you have mistaken your profession, have the power of governing your own thoughts, and of following and interpreting the thoughts of others. Also, you see the work to be done put plainly before you; you can deliberately choose what seems to you best, out of myriads of examples of perfect Art. You can count the cost accurately; saying, "It will take me a year—two years—five—a fourth

[1] [Tennyson: *The Princess*, iv:—

"Unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square."

The line is quoted in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 459).]

[2] [So in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 12, Ruskin speaks of the old engravers as "masters of the bright field," the steel plate being their field of battle.]

or fifth, probably, of my remaining life, to do this." Is the thing worth it? There is no excuse for choosing wrongly; no other men whatever have data so full, and position so firm, for forecast of their labour.

53. I put my psalter aside (not, observe, vouching for its red and green dragons:—men lifted up their souls to vanity[1] sometimes in the thirteenth as in the nineteenth century), and I take up, instead, a book of English verses, published—there is no occasion to say when. It is full of costliest engravings—large, skilful, appallingly laborious; dotted into textures like the dust on a lily leaf,—smoothed through gradations like clouds,—graved to surfaces like mother-of-pearl; and by all this toil there is set forth for the delight of English women, a series of the basest dreams that ungoverned feminine imagination can coin in sickliest indolence,—ball-room amours, combats of curled knights, pilgrimages of disguised girl-pages, romantic pieties, charities in costume,—a mass of disguised sensualism and feverish vanity—impotent, pestilent, prurient, scented with a venomous elixir, and rouged with a deadly dust of outward good; and all this done, as such things only can be done, in a boundless ignorance of all natural veracity; the faces falsely drawn—the lights falsely cast—the forms effaced or distorted, and all common human wit and sense extinguished in the vicious scum of lying sensation.

And this, I grieve to say, is only a characteristic type of a large mass of popular English work. This is what we spend our Teutonic lives in, engraving with an iron pen in the rock for ever; this, the passion of the Teutonic woman (as opposed to Virgilia), just as fox-hunting is the passion of the Teutonic man, as opposed to Valerius.[2]

54. And while we deliberately spend all our strength, and all our tenderness, all our skill, and all our money, in

[1] [See above, § 50. On the grotesques in the Psalter of St. Louis, see *Queen of the Air*, § 71 (below, p. 365); and compare p. 183.]

[2] [For Virgilia, as the "loveliest" of Shakespeare's types of heroic women, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 56 (Vol. XVIII. p. 112). On fox-hunting, see Vol. VII. p. 340; and for Valerius, as an heroic Roman type, see *Unto this Last*, Preface, § 6 (Vol. XVII. p. 23); and compare *Art of England*, § 160.]

doing, relishing, buying, this absolute Wrongness, of which nothing can ever come but disease in heart and brain, remember that all the mighty works of the great painters of the world, full of life, truth, and blessing, remain to this present hour of the year 1865 unengraved! There literally exists no earnestly studied and fully accomplished engraving of any very great work, except Leonardo's Cena. No large Venetian picture has ever been thoroughly engraved. Of Titian's Peter Martyr, there is even no worthy memorial transcript but Lefèbre's. The Cartoons have been multiplied in false readings; never in faithful ones till lately by photography. Of the Disputa and the Parnassus, what can the English public know? of the thoughtful Florentines and Milanese, of Ghirlandajo, and Luini, and their accompanying hosts—what do they yet so much as care to know?[1]

"The English public will not pay," you reply, "for engravings from the great masters. The English public will only pay for pictures of itself; of its races, its rifle-meetings, its rail stations, its parlour-passions, and kitchen interests; you must make your bread as you may, by holding the mirror to it."[2]

55. Friends, there have been hard fighting and heavy sleeping, this many a day, on the other side of the Atlantic, in the cause, as you suppose, of Freedom against slavery; and you are all, open-mouthed, expecting the glories of Black Emancipation. Perhaps a little White Emancipation on this side of the water might be still more desirable, and more easily and guiltlessly won.[3]

[1] [For Ruskin's opinion of the "Last Supper" of Leonardo, see Vol. IV. p. 317, and Vol. VII. p. 328. For Titian's "Peter Martyr," see Vol. III. p. 28; and for references to Lefèbre's engravings, Vol. VII. pp. 95, 224. For Raphael's Cartoons, see Vol. III. p. 29; for the "Disputa," taken by Ruskin as the "type of the Italian School," see Vol. XIV. p. 268, and the other passages there noted; and for the "Parnassus," "the greatest of the Vatican Raphael frescoes," Vol. XI. p. 130. Of the "Parnassus," and of many works by Ghirlandajo and Luini, the Arundel Society afterwards published chromo-lithographs.]

[2] [*Hamlet*, iii. 2, 26.]

[3] [See *Munera Pulveris*, § 130, and the note (Vol. XVII. p. 254); and on the war, *Time and Tide*, § 141 (*ibid.*, pp. 431–433). For the slavery of engraving, compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 97.]

Do you know what slavery means? Supposing a gentleman taken by a Barbary corsair—set to field-work; chained and flogged to it from dawn to eve. Need he be a slave therefore? By no means; he is but a hardly-treated prisoner. There is some work which the Barbary corsair will not be able to make him do; such work as a Christian gentleman may not do, that he will not, though he die for it. Bound and scourged he may be, but he has heard of a Person's being bound and scourged before now, who was not therefore a slave. He is not a whit more slave for that. But suppose he take the pirate's pay, and stretch his back at piratical oars, for due salary, how then? Suppose for fitting price he betray his fellow prisoners, and take up the scourge instead of enduring it—become the smiter instead of the smitten, at the African's bidding—how then? Of all the sheepish notions in our English public "mind," I think the simplest is that slavery is neutralised when you are well paid for it! Whereas it is precisely that fact of its being paid for which makes it complete. A man who has been sold by another, may be but half a slave or none; but the man who has sold himself! He is the accurately Finished Bondsman.

56. And gravely I say that I know *no* captivity so sorrowful as that of an artist doing, consciously, bad work for pay.[1] It is the serfdom of the finest gifts—of all that should lead and master men, offering itself to be spit upon, and that for a bribe. There is much serfdom, in Europe, of speakers and writers, but they only sell words; and their talk, even honestly uttered, might not have been worth much; it will not be thought of ten years hence; still less a hundred years hence. No one will buy our parliamentary speeches to keep in portfolios this time next century; and if people are weak enough now to pay for any special and flattering cadence of syllable, it is little matter. But *you*, with your painfully acquired power, your

[1] [On the ethics of artist's work and pay, see *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 32, 33 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 412–415).]

unwearied patience, your admirable and manifold gifts, your eloquence in black and white, which people will buy, if it is good (and has a broad margin), for fifty guineas a copy—in the year 2000; to sell it all, as Ananias his land, "yea, for so much,"[1] and hold yourselves at every fool's beck, with your ready points, polished and sharp, hasting to scratch what *he* wills! To bite permanent mischief in with acid; to spread an inked infection of evil all your days, and pass away at last from a life of the skilfullest industry—having done whatsoever your hand found (remuneratively) to do, with your might, and a great might, but with cause to thank God only for this—that the end of it all has at last come, and that "there is no device nor work in the Grave."[2] One would get quit of *this* servitude, I think, though we reached the place of Rest a little sooner, and reached it fasting.

57. My English fellow-workmen, you have the name of liberty often on your lips; get the fact of it oftener into your business! talk of it less, and try to understand it better. You have given students many copy-books of free-hand outlines—give them a few of free *heart* outlines.

It appears, however, that you do not intend to help me[3] with any utterance respecting these same outlines.* Be it so: I must make out what I can by myself. And under the influence of the Solstitial sign of June[4] I will go backwards, or askance, to the practical part of the business, where I left it three months ago, and take up that question first, touching Liberty, and the relation of

* I have received some interesting private letters, but cannot make use of them at present, because they enter into general discussion instead of answering the specific question I asked, respecting the power of the black line; and I must observe to correspondents that in future their letters should be addressed to the Editor of this Journal, not to me; as I do not wish to incur the responsibility of selection.

[1] [Acts v. 8.]
[2] [Ecclesiastes ix. 10: often quoted by Ruskin (*e.g.*, Vol. VII. p. 313, Vol. XVIII. p. 175).]
[3] [See Ruskin's invitation above, § 20, p. 70.]
[4] [The crab; see *Art of England*, § 105 ("the great zodiacal crustacean").]

the loose swift line to the resolute slow one and of the etched line to the engraved one. It is a worthy question, for the open field afforded by illustrated works is tempting even to our best painters, and many an earnest hour and active fancy spend and speak themselves in the black line, vigorously enough, and dramatically, at all events: if wisely, may be considered. The French also are throwing great passion into their *eaux fortes*—working with a vivid haste and dark, brilliant freedom, which looked as if they etched with very energetic waters indeed—quite waters of life (it does not look so well, written in French). So we will take, with the reader's permission, for text next month, "Rembrandt, and strong waters."

CHAPTER V[1]

["REMBRANDT, AND STRONG WATERS"]

58. THE work I have to do in this paper ought, rightly, to have been thrown into the form of an appendix to the last chapter; for it is no link of the cestus of Aglaia we have to examine, but one of the crests of canine passion in the cestus of Scylla.[2] Nevertheless, the girdle of the Grace cannot be discerned in the full brightness of it, but by comparing it with the dark torment of that other; and (in what place or form matters little) the work has to be done.

"Rembrandt Van Rhyn"—it is said, in the last edition of a very valuable work * (for which, nevertheless, I could wish that greater lightness in the hand should be obtained by the publication of its information in one volume, and its criticism in another) — was "the most attractive and original of painters." It may be so; but there are attractions, and attractions. The sun attracts the planets—and a candle, night-moths; the one with perhaps somewhat of benefit to the planets;—but with what benefit the other

* Wornum's *Epochs of Painting*.[3] I have continual occasion to quarrel with my friend on these matters of critical question; but I have deep respect for his earnest and patient research, and we remain friends—on the condition that I am to learn much from him, and he (though it may be questionable whose fault that is) nothing from me.

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[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv. pp. 177–178. June 1865.]

[2] [For "the devouring hound at the waist of Scylla," see *Queen of the Air*, § 39; and for references to "canine passion" in Greek myths of the dog, *ibid.*, § 23 (below, pp. 339, 316).]

[3] [Edition of 1864, 8vo, p. 583. The characterisation of Rembrandt is at p. 416. For other references to R. N. Wornum, see Vol. XIII. pp. xviii., xxxii., xxxvii., 87, 95, 140, 319.]

to the moths, one would be glad to learn from those desert flies, of whom, one company having extinguished Mr. Kinglake's candle with their bodies, the remainder, "who had failed in obtaining this martyrdom, became suddenly serious, and clung despondingly to the canvas."[1]

59. Also, there are originalities, and originalities. To invent a new thing, which is also a precious thing; to be struck by a divinely-guided Rod, and become a sudden fountain of life to thirsty multitudes[2]—this is enviable. But to be distinct of men in an original Sin; elect for the initial letter of a Lie; the first apparent spot of an unknown plague; a Root of bitterness,[3] and the first-born worm of a company, studying an original De-Composition,—this is perhaps not so enviable. And if we think of it, most human originality is apt to be of that kind. Goodness is one, and immortal; it may be received and communicated—not originated: but Evil is various and recurrent, and may be misbegotten in endlessly surprising ways.[4]

60. But, that we may know better in what this originality consists, we find that our author, after expatiating on the vast area of the Pantheon, "illuminated solely by the small circular opening in the dome above," and on other similar conditions of luminous contraction, tells us that "to Rembrandt belongs the glory of having first embodied in Art, and perpetuated, these rare and beautiful effects of nature."[5] Such effects are indeed rare in nature; but they are not rare, absolutely. The sky, with the sun in it, does not usually give the impression of being dimly lighted through a circular hole; but you may observe a very similar effect any day in your coal-cellar. The light is not Rembrandtesque on the current, or banks, of a river; but it is on those of a drain. Colour is not

[1] [*Eothen*, ch. xvii. ("The Desert").]
[2] [Exodus xvii. 6.]
[3] [Hebrews xii. 15.]
[4] [Compare Vol. III. p. 14 *n.*, and the references there given.]
[5] [*Epochs of Painting*, p. 421.]

Rembrandtesque, usually, in a clean house; but is presently obtainable of that quality in a dirty one. And without denying the pleasantness of the mode of progression which Mr. Hazlitt, perhaps too enthusiastically, describes as attainable in a background of Rembrandt's—"You stagger from one abyss of obscurity to another"[1]—I cannot feel it an entirely glorious speciality to be distinguished, as Rembrandt was, from other great painters, chiefly by the liveliness of his darkness, and the dulness of his light. Glorious, or inglorious, the speciality itself is easily and accurately definable. It is the aim of the best painters to paint the noblest things they can see by sunlight. It was the aim of Rembrandt to paint the foulest things he could see—by rushlight.

61. By rushlight, observe: material and spiritual. As the sun for the outer world; so in the inner world of man, that which "ἐρευνᾷ ταμεῖα κοιλίας"*—"the candle of God, searching the inmost parts."[2] If that light within become but a more active kind of darkness;—if, abdicating the measuring reed of modesty[3] for sceptre, and ceasing to measure with it, we dip it in such unctuous and inflammable refuse as we can find, and make our soul's light into a *tallow* candle, and thenceforward take our guttering, sputtering, ill-smelling illumination about with us, holding it out in fetid fingers—encumbered with its lurid warmth of fungous wick, and drip of stalactitic grease—that we may see, when another man would have seen, or dreamed he saw, the flight of a divine Virgin—only the lamp-light upon the hair of a costermonger's ass;—that, having to paint the good Samaritan, we may see only in distance the back of the good Samaritan, and in nearness the back of

* Prov. xx. 27.

[1] [*Criticisms on Art*, by William Hazlitt, 1843, p. 15. The passage occurs in a notice of Rembrandt's "Woman taken in Adultery" in the National Gallery (No. 45). For another reference to Hazlitt's criticisms, see Vol. III. p. 350.]

[2] [Septuagint. The Authorised Version has, "The spirit of man is the candle of God searching all the inward parts of the belly."]

[3] [See above, § 22, p. 73.]

the good Samaritan's dog;—that having to paint the Annunciation to the Shepherds, we may turn the announcement of peace to men, into an announcement of mere panic to beasts; and, in an unsightly firework of unsightlier angels, see, as we see always, the feet instead of the head, and the shame instead of the honour;[1]—and finally concentrate and rest the sum of our fame, as Titian on the Assumption of a spirit, so we on the dissection of a carcase,[2]—perhaps by such fatuous fire, the less we walk, and by such phosphoric glow, the less we shine, the better it may be for us, and for all who would follow us.

62. Do not think I deny the greatness of Rembrandt. In mere technical power (none of his eulogists know that power better than I, nor declare it in more distinct terms)[3] he might, if he had been educated in a true school, have taken rank with the Venetians themselves. But that type of distinction between Titian's Assumption, and Rembrandt's Dissection, will represent for you with sufficient significance the manner of choice in all their work; only it should be associated with another characteristic example of the same opposition (which I have dwelt upon elsewhere[4]) between Veronese and Rembrandt, in their conception of domestic life. Rembrandt's picture, at Dresden, of himself, with his wife sitting on his knee, a roasted peacock on the table, and a glass of champagne in his hand, is the best work I know of all he has left; and it marks his speciality with entire decision. It is, of course, a dim candlelight; and the choice of the sensual passions as the

[1] [The references here are to the plate of the "Flight into Egypt," 1651 (No. 58 in Eugène Dutuit's *L'Œuvre Complet de Rembrandt*, 1883); the plate of "The Good Samaritan" (see also § 62), 1633 (No. 75 in Dutuit); and the plate of "The Angel appearing to the Shepherds," 1634 (No. 49 in Dutuit): for another note on this last plate, see *Notes on the Educational Series*, No. 236 (Vol. XX.).]

[2] [For other references to Titian's "Assumption," see Vol. VII. pp. 289, 298, and Vol. XI. p. 380. Rembrandt's "Dissection" is the celebrated picture of 1632 in the Hague Museum, "The Lesson in Anatomy:" see below, p. 212.]

[3] [For instance, in *A Joy for Ever*, § 164 (Vol. XVI. p. 151), and see General Index.]

[4] [*Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. chs. iii. and vi. (Vol. VII. pp. 289 *seq.*, 328 *seq.*); and for the picture at Dresden, see *ibid.*, p. 331.]

things specially and for ever to be described and immortalized out of his own private life and love, is exactly that "painting the foulest thing by rushlight" which I have stated to be the enduring purpose of his mind. And you will find this hold in all minor treatment; and that to the uttermost: for as by your broken rushlight you see little, and only corners and points of things, and those very corners and points ill and distortedly; so, although Rembrandt knows the human face and hand, and never fails in these, when they are ugly, and he chooses to take pains with them, he knows nothing else: the more pains he takes with even familiar animals, the worse they are (witness the horse in that plate of the Good Samaritan), and any attempts to finish the first scribbled energy of his imaginary lions and tigers, end always only in the loss of the fiendish power and rage which were all he could conceive in an animal.[1]

68. His landscape, and foreground vegetation, I mean afterwards to examine in comparison with Dürer's;[2] but the real calibre and nature of the man are best to be understood by comparing the puny, ill-drawn, terrorless, helpless, beggarly skeleton in his "Youth Surprised by Death,"[3] with the figure behind the tree in Dürer's plate (though it is quite one of Dürer's feeblest) of the same subject. Absolutely ignorant of all natural phenomena and law; absolutely careless of all lovely living form, or growth, or structure; able only to render with some approach to veracity, what alone he had looked at with some approach to attention,—the pawnbroker's festering heaps of old clothes, and caps, and shoes—Rembrandt's execution is one grand evasion, and his temper the grim contempt of a strong and sullen animal in its defiled den, for the humanity

[1] [Several hunting scenes, with lions, etched in a slight and rough manner, by Rembrandt, may be seen in the British Museum; as also many similar drawings in pen, bistre, and bistre wash.]

[2] [A reference to the intended, but unwritten, sequel.]

[3] [Rembrandt's plate of this subject is rare; a copy may be seen in the British Museum. It is No. 110 in Dutuit's *L'Œuvre Complet de Rembrandt*. Dürer's plate is that entitled "The Promenade."]

with which it is at war, for the flowers which it tramples, and the light which it fears.

64. Again, do not let it be thought that when I call his execution evasive, I ignore the difference between his touch, on brow or lip, and a common workman's; but the whole school of etching which he founded (and of painting, so far as it differs from Venetian work) is inherently loose and experimental. Etching is the very refuge and mask of sentimental uncertainty, and of vigorous ignorance.[1] If you know anything clearly, and have a firm hand, depend upon it, you will draw it clearly; you will not care to hide it among scratches and burrs. And herein is the first grand distinction between etching and engraving—that in the etching needle you have an almost irresistible temptation to a wanton speed. There is, however, no real necessity for such a distinction; an etched line may have been just as steadily drawn, and seriously meant, as an engraved one; and for the moment, waiving consideration of this distinction, and opposing Rembrandt's work, considered merely as work of the black line, to Holbein's and Dürer's, as work of the black line, I assert Rembrandt's to be inherently *evasive*. You cannot unite his manner with theirs; choice between them is sternly put to you, when first you touch the steel. Suppose, for instance, you have to engrave, or etch, or draw with pen and ink, a single head, and that the head is to be approximately half an inch in height more or less (there is a reason for assigning this condition respecting size, which we will examine in due time)[2]: you have it in your power to do it in one

[1] [This much-questioned dictum is repeated and enforced in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 180 ("etching is an indolent and blundering method at the best"). To the "coarseness and rudeness" of his own early essays in the art, he refers in the Preface to *Seven Lamps* (Vol. VIII. p. 4). In the *Elements of Drawing* he recommends the copying of Rembrandt's etchings, for the "steady purpose" even in "the most rapid lines" of that master (Vol. XV. p. 78, and compare the remarks on Turner's etchings, *ibid.*, p. 121). In *The Art of England*, § 130, he says that in etching, "though a great quantity of the shade is mere burr and scrabble and blotch, a certain quantity of real care and skill *must* be spent in covering the surface at first." For other remarks on the virtues, faults, and limitations of etching, see the paper on Mr. Ernest George in Vol. XIV. pp. 335–338.]

[2] [Again a reference to the intended, but unwritten, sequel.]

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The Cannon

of two ways. You may lay down some twenty or thirty entirely firm and visible lines, of which every one shall be absolutely right, and do the utmost a line can do. By their curvature they shall render contour; by their thickness, shade; by their place and form, every truth of expression, and every condition of design. The head of the soldier drawing his sword, in Dürer's "Cannon,"[1] is about half an inch high, supposing the brow to be seen. The chin is drawn with three lines, the lower lip with two, the upper, including the shadow from the nose, with five. Three separate the cheek from the chin, giving the principal points of character. Six lines draw the cheek, and its incised traces of care; four are given to each of the eyes; one, with the outline, to the nose; three to the frown of the forehead. None of these touches could anywhere be altered—none removed, without instantly visible harm; and their result is a head as perfect in character as a portrait by Reynolds.

65. You may either do this—which, if you can, it will generally be very advisable to do—or, on the other hand, you may cover the face with innumerable scratches, and let your hand play with wanton freedom, until the graceful scrabble concentrates itself into shade. You may soften—efface—retouch—rebite—dot, and hatch, and redefine. If you are a great master, you will soon get your character, and probably keep it (Rembrandt often gets it at first, nearly as securely as Dürer); but the design of it will be necessarily seen through loose work, and modified by accident (as you think) fortunate. The accidents which occur to a practised hand are always at first pleasing—the details which can be hinted, however falsely, through the gathering mystery, are always seducing. You will find yourself gradually dwelling more and more on little meannesses of form and texture, and lustres of surface: on cracks of skin, and films of fur and plume. You will lose your way, and

[1] [For other references to this plate (here reproduced), see above, § 19, p. 69; Vol. VII. p. 305 (where a portion is given), and Vol. XV. p. 85.]

then see two ways, and then many ways, and try to walk a little distance on all of them in turn, and so, back again. You will find yourself thinking of colours, and vexed because you cannot imitate them; next, struggling to render distances by indecision, which you cannot by tone. Presently you will be contending with finished pictures; labouring at the etching, as if it were a painting. You will leave off, after a whole day's work (after many days' work if you choose to give them), still unsatisfied. For final result—if you are as great as Rembrandt—you will have most likely a heavy, black, cloudy stain, with less character in it than the first ten lines had. If you are not as great as Rembrandt, you will have a stain by no means cloudy; but sandy and broken,—instead of a face, a speckled phantom of a face, patched, blotched, discomfited in every texture and form—ugly, assuredly; dull, probably; an unmanageable and manifold failure ill concealed by momentary, accidental, undelightful, ignoble success.

Undelightful; note this especially, for it is the peculiar character of etching that it cannot render beauty. You may hatch and scratch your way to picturesqueness or to deformity—never to beauty. You can etch an old woman, or an ill-conditioned fellow. But you cannot etch a girl—nor, unless in his old age, or with very partial rendering of him, a gentleman.

66. And thus, as farther belonging to, and partly causative of, their choice of means, there is always a tendency in etchers to fasten on unlovely objects; and the whole scheme of modern rapid work of this kind is connected with a peculiar gloom which results from the confinement of men, partially informed, and wholly untrained, in the midst of foul and vicious cities. A sensitive and imaginative youth, early driven to get his living by his art, has to lodge, we will say, somewhere in the by-streets of Paris, and is left there, tutorless, to his own devices. Suppose him also vicious or reckless, and there need be no talk of his work farther; he will certainly do nothing in a

Düreresque manner. But suppose him self-denying, virtuous, full of gift and power—what are the elements of living study within his reach? All supreme beauty is confined to the higher salons. There are pretty faces in the streets, but no stateliness nor splendour of humanity; all pathos and grandeur is in suffering; no purity of nature is accessible, but only a terrible picturesqueness, mixed with ghastly, with ludicrous, with base concomitants. Huge walls and roofs, dark on the sunset sky, but plastered with advertisement bills, monstrous-figured, seen farther than ever Parthenon shaft, or spire of Sainte Chapelle. Interminable lines of massy streets, wearisome with repetition of commonest design, and degraded by their gilded shops, wide-fuming, flaunting, glittering, with apparatus of eating or of dress. Splendour of palace-flank and goodly quay, insulted by floating cumber of barge and bath, trivial, grotesque, indecent, as cleansing vessels in a royal reception room. Solemn avenues of blossomed trees, shading puppet-show and baby-play; glades of wild-wood, long withdrawn, purple with faded shadows of blood; sweet windings and reaches of river far among the brown vines and white orchards, checked here by the Ile Nôtre Dame, to receive their nightly sacrifice, and after playing with it among their eddies, to give it up again, in those quiet shapes that lie on the sloped slate tables of the square-built Temple of the Death-Sibyl, who presides here over spray of Seine, as yonder at Tiber over spray of Anio.[1] Sibylline, indeed, in her secrecy, and her sealing of destinies, by the baptism of the quick water-drops which fall on each fading face, unrecognized, nameless in *this* Baptism for ever. Wreathed thus throughout, that Paris town, with beauty, and with unseemly sin, unseemlier death, as a fiend-city with fair eyes; for ever letting fall her silken raiment so far as that one may "behold her bosom and half her side."[2] Under

[1] [For another allusion to the Morgue at Paris, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 15; and to the Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli, Vol. IX. p. 12.]
[2] [Coleridge: *Christabel*, line 252.]

whose whispered teaching, and substitution of *Contes Drôlatiques*[1] for the tales of the wood fairy, her children of Imagination will do, what Gérome[2] and Gustave Doré are doing, and her whole world of lesser Art will sink into shadows of the street and of the boudoir-curtain, wherein the etching point may disport itself with freedom enough.*

* As I was preparing these sheets for press, I chanced on a passage in a novel of Champfleury's, in which one young student is encouraging another in his contest with these and other such evils;—the evils are in this passage accepted as necessities; the inevitable deadliness of the element is not seen, as it can hardly be except by those who live out of it. The encouragement, on such view, is good and right; the connection of the young etcher's power with his poverty is curiously illustrative of the statements in the text, and the whole passage, though long, is well worth such space as it will ask here, in our small print.

"Cependant," dit Thomas, "on a vu des peintres de talent qui étaient partis de Paris après avoir exposé de bons tableaux et qui s'en revenaient classiquement ennuyeux. C'est donc la faute de l'enseignement de l'Académie."

"Bah!" dit Gérard, "rien n'arrête le développement d'un homme de talent: ni la misère, ni la maladie, ni les faux conseils, ni les mauvais enseignements. Nous sommes environnés d'ennuyeux, d'imbéciles, de traîtres, de lâches; si nous sommes forts, nous devons nous débarrasser de tous ces ennemis. Si nous n'avons pas le courage, c'est-à-dire une conviction profonde de l'art, nous succumbons, tant pis, il n'y a rien à dire. Nous ne sommes pas des victimes, nous n'étions pas dignes de faire de l'art, et nous sommes entrés pas erreur dans ce beau et rude chemin qui mène à la popularité. On est doué, ou on ne l'est pas."

. . . . . .

"Pourtant j'ai connu plus d'un peintre que la misère a paralysé complètement, et qui, avec un peu d'aide, eût produit de belles choses. Au lieu de cela, il est tombé dans les mains des marchands, et il s'est livré à de honteuses lithographies."

"C'est qu'il était né pour faire de pareilles lithographies."

"Mais," dit Thomas, "il pleure d'être obligé de faire du commerce."

"Il fait semblant de pleurer."

"Non, non," dit Thomas.

"Alors il se trompe sur lui-même: puisqu'il comprend l'art, pourquoi ne fait-il pas d'art?"

"Parce qu'il gagne à peu près sa vie en faisant du commerce."

"On dirait que tu ne veux pas me comprendre, toi qui as justement

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[1] [See for a criticism of Doré's illustrations to Balzac, *Time and Tide*, § 30 (Vol. XVII. p. 344).]

[2] [For other references to Gérome, see Vol. XV. p. 497 *n.*]

67. Nor are we slack in our companionship in these courses. Our imagination is slower and clumsier than the French—rarer also, by far, in the average English mind. The only man of power equal to Doré's whom we have had lately among us, was William Blake,[1] whose temper fortunately took another turn. But in the calamity and

passé par là. Comment faisais-tu quand tu étais compositeur d'une imprimerie?"

"Le soir," dit Thomas, "et le matin en hiver, à partir de quatre heures, je faisais des études à la lampe pendant deux heures, jusqu'au moment où j'allais à l'atelier."

"Et tu ne vivais pas de la peinture?"

"Je ne gagnais pas un sou."

"Bon!" dit Gérard; "tu vois bien que tu faisais du commerce en dehors de l'art et que cependant tu étudiais. Quand tu es sorti de l'imprimerie, comment as-tu vécu?"

"Je faisais cinq ou six petites aquarelles par jour, que je vendais, sous les arcades de l'Institut, six sous pièce."

"Et tu en vivais; c'est encore du commerce. Tu vois donc que ni l'imprimerie, ni les petits dessins, à cinq sous, ni la privation, ni la misère ne t'ont empêché d'arriver."

"Je ne suis pas arrivé."

"N'importe, tu arriveras certainement. . . . Si tu veux d'autres exemples qui prouvent que la misère et les autres piéges tendus sous nos pas ne doivent rien arrêter, tu te rappelles bien ce pauvre garçon dont vous admiriez les eaux-fortes, que vous mettiez aussi haut que Rembrandt, et qui aurait été loin, disiez-vous, s'il n'avait tant souffert de la faim. Qu'a-t-il fait le jour où il lui est tombé un petit héritage du ciel?"

"Il est vrai," dit Thomas, embarrassé; "qu'il a perdu tout son sentiment."

"Ce n'était pas cependant une de ces grosses fortunes qui tuent un homme, qui le rendent lourd, fier et insolent: il avait juste de quoi vivre, six cents francs de rentes, une fortune pour lui, qui vivait avec cinq francs par mois. Il a continué à travailler; mais ses eaux-fortes n'étaient plus supportables; tandis qu'avant, il vivait avec un morceau de pain et des légumes; alors il avait du talent. Cela, Thomas, doit te prouver que ni les mauvais enseignements, ni les influences, ni la misère, ni la faim, ni la maladie, ne peuvent corrompre une nature bien douée. Elle souffre; mais trouve moi un grand artiste qui n'ait pas souffert. Il n'y a pas un seul homme de génie heureux depuis que l'humanité existe."

"J'ai envie," dit Thomas, "de te faire cadeau d'une jolie cravate."

"Pourquoi?" dit Gérard.

"Parce que tu as bien parlé."

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[1] [See above, § 4, p. 56.]

vulgarity of daily circumstance, in the horror of our streets, in the discordance of our thoughts, in the laborious looseness and ostentatious cleverness of our work, we are alike. And to French faults we add a stupidity of our own; for which, so far as I may in modesty take blame for anything, as resulting from my own teaching, I am more answerable than most men. Having spoken earnestly against painting without thinking, I now find our exhibitions decorated with works of students who think without painting;[1] and our books illustrated by scratched woodcuts, representing very ordinary people, who are presumed to be interesting in the picture, because the text tells a story about them. Of this least lively form of modern sensational work, however, I shall have to speak on other grounds; meantime, I am concerned only with its manner; its incontinence of line and method, associated with the slightness of its real thought, and morbid acuteness of irregular sensation; ungoverned all, and one of the external and slight phases of that beautiful Liberty which we are proclaiming as essence of gospel to all the earth, and shall presently, I suppose, when we have had enough of it here, proclaim also to the stars, with invitation to them *out* of their courses.[2]

68. "But you asked us for 'free-heart' outlines, and told us not to be slaves, only thirty days ago."[3]

Inconsistent that I am![4] so I did. But as there are attractions, and attractions; originalities, and originalities, there are liberties, and liberties.[5] Yonder torrent, crystal-clear, and arrow-swift, with its spray leaping into the air like white troops of fawns, is free, I think. Lost, yonder, amidst bankless, boundless marsh—soaking in slow shallowness, as it will, hither and thither, listless, among the

[1] [See Vol. III. p. 88 *n.*, and compare Vol. XIV. p. 65.]
[2] [See Judges v. 20.]
[3] [In the paper in the preceding number of the *Art Journal*: see above, § 57, p. 105.]
[4] [Compare Vol. V. p. liv. *n.*; Vol. VII. p. 356; Vol. XVI. p. 187.]
[5] [The passage from "there are liberties and liberties" to the end of the chapter was used again by Ruskin, with alterations, in *Queen of the Air*, § 143: see below, p. 409.]

poisonous reeds and unresisting slime—it is free also. You may choose which liberty you will, and restraint of voiceful rock, or the dumb and edgeless shore of darkened sand. Of that evil liberty, which men are now glorifying,—and of its opposite continence—which is the clasp and χρυσέη περόνη[1] of Aglaia's cestus—we will try to find out something in next chapter.

[1] [*Iliad*, v. 425.]

CHAPTER VI[1]

[LIBERTY]

69. No quality of Art has been more powerful in its influence on public mind; none is more frequently the subject of popular praise, or the end of vulgar effort, than what we call "Freedom." It is necessary to determine the justice or injustice of this popular praise.

70. I said, a little while ago, that the practical teaching of the masters of Art was summed by the o of Giotto.[2] Yet that cipher may become, if rightly read, an expression of infinity, at least in one direction of teaching.[3] "You may judge my masterhood of craft," Giotto tells us, "by seeing that I can draw a circle unerringly." And we may safely believe him, understanding him to mean, that—though more may be necessary to an artist than such a power—at least *this* power is necessary. The qualities of hand and eye needful to do this are the first conditions of artistic craft.

71. Try to draw a circle yourself with the "free" hand, and with a single line. You cannot do it if your hand trembles, nor if it hesitates, nor if it is unmanageable, nor if it is in the common sense of the word "free." So far from being free, it must be under a control as absolute and accurate as if it were fastened to an inflexible bar of steel. And yet it must move, under this necessary control, with perfect, untormented serenity of ease.

72. That is the condition of all good work whatsoever.

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. v. pp. 197–199, July 1865. §§ 69–85 here were reprinted in *Queen of the Air*, §§ 143–159 (see below, p. 409).]

[2] [See above, § 11, p. 63.]

[3] [The sentence "Yet . . . teaching" was omitted in *Queen of the Air*.]

All freedom is error. Every line you lay down is either right or wrong: it may be timidly and awkwardly wrong, or fearlessly and impudently wrong: the aspect of the impudent wrongness is pleasurable to vulgar persons; and is what they commonly call "free" execution: the timid, tottering, hesitating wrongness is rarely so attractive; yet sometimes, if accompanied with good qualities, and right aims in other directions, it becomes in a manner charming, like the inarticulateness of a child: but, whatever the charm or manner of the error there is but one question ultimately to be asked respecting every line you draw, Is it right or wrong? If right, it most assuredly is not a "free" line, but an intensely continent, restrained, and considered line; and the action of the hand in laying it is just as decisive, and just as "free" as the hand of a first-rate surgeon in a critical incision. A great operator told me that his hand could check itself within about the two-hundredth of an inch, in penetrating a membrane; and this, of course, without the help of sight, by sensation only. With help of sight, and in action on a substance which does not quiver nor yield, a fine artist's line is measurable in its purposed direction to considerably less than the thousandth of an inch.[1]

A wide freedom, truly!

78. The conditions of popular art which most foster the common ideas about freedom, are merely results of irregularly energetic effort by men imperfectly educated; these conditions being variously mingled with cruder mannerisms resulting from timidity, or actual imperfection of body. Northern hands and eyes are, of course, never so subtle as Southern; and in very cold countries, artistic execution is palsied. The effort to break through this timidity, or to refine the bluntness, may lead to a licentious impetuosity, or an ostentatious minuteness. Every man's manner has this kind of relation to some defect in his physical powers or modes of thought; so that in the greatest work there

[1] [On this point, see Vol. XIII. pp. 334–336.]

is no manner visible.[1] It is at first uninteresting from its quietness; the majesty of restrained power only dawns gradually upon us, as we walk towards its horizon.

There is, indeed, often great delightfulness in the innocent manners of artists who have real power and honesty, and draw, in this way or that, as best they can, under such and such untoward circumstances of life.[2] Thus the execution of Prout was that of a master with great and true sentiment for the pathos of ruin, with great and ready power of the arrangement of masses, and fine sense of light and shade; but uneducated,[3] and near-sighted. Make a scholar of such an one, and give him good eyes, and it is impossible for him ever to draw in that way again; how he would have drawn, one cannot say; but it would have been wholly and exaltedly otherwise. The execution of Cox is merely a condition of Northern palsy, through which, in a blundering way, a true sense of certain modes of colour, and of the sweetness of certain natural scenes, finds innocent expression.

So even with great old William Hunt: whatever was peculiar in his execution, broken, spotty, or clumsy, is the character of a rustic, partly of a physically feeble hand; the exquisite truth which is seen by the subtle mind, gives a charm to the expression, as to a country dialect.[4] But the greater part of the looseness, flimsiness, or audacity of modern work is the expression of an inner spirit of licence[5] in mind

[1] [In the original paper this passage reads:—
"The effort . . . the bluntness, leads, in some of the greatest Northern masters, to a licentious sweep and stormy impetuosity of hand, or, in the meanest, to an ostentatious and microscopic minuteness. Every man's manner has relation to his physical powers and modes of thought, but in the greatest work there is no manner visible."]

[2] [Compare *Two Paths*, Vol. XVI. p. 300 and *n.*]

[3] [Compare Vol. XII. pp. 305 *seq.*, and Vol. XIV. p. 375; and for Prout's shortsightedness, Vol. XII. p. 362. For Cox, see Vol. III. p. 46 *n.*]

[4] [In the *Queen of the Air*, the above passage "Thus the execution of Prout . . . dialect" was omitted.]

[5] [In the original paper this passage reads:—
"But the looseness and flimsiness of modern etching and wood engraving are very different from these manners, and far less pardonable; being more or less affected, and in great part the expression of an inner spirit of licence . . ."]

and heart, connected, as I said, with the peculiar folly of this age, its hope of, and trust in, "liberty." Of which we must reason a little in more general terms.

74. I believe we can nowhere find a better type of a perfectly free creature than in the common house fly.[1] Nor free only, but brave; and irreverent to a degree which I think no human republican could by any philosophy exalt himself to. There is no courtesy in him; he does not care whether it is king or clown whom he teases; and in every step of his swift mechanical march, and in every pause of his resolute observation, there is one and the same expression of perfect egotism, perfect independence, and self-confidence, and conviction of the world's having been made for flies. Strike at him with your hand; and to him, the mechanical fact and external aspect of the matter is, what to you it would be, if an acre of red clay, ten feet thick, tore itself up from the ground in one massive field, hovered over you in the air for a second, and came crashing down with an aim. That is the external aspect of it; the inner aspect, to his fly's mind, is of a quite natural and unimportant occurrence—one of the momentary conditions of his active life. He steps out of the way of your hand, and alights on the back of it. You cannot terrify him, nor govern him, nor persuade him, nor convince him. He has his own positive opinion on all matters; not an unwise one, usually, for his own ends; and will ask no advice of yours. He has no work to do—no tyrannical instinct to obey. The earthworm has his digging; the bee her gathering and building; the spider her cunning network; the ant her treasury and accounts. All these are comparatively slaves, or people of vulgar business. But your fly, free in the air, free in the chamber—a black incarnation of caprice—wandering, investigating, flitting, flirting, feasting at his will, with rich variety

[1] [See *Queen of the Air*, § 35 (below, p. 332), for a reference to this passage. Compare *Two Paths*, § 191 (Vol. XVI. p. 407), where Ruskin similarly takes the fish as a type of a "free" being. See also *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 137 (Vol. XVIII. p. 497). And for another passage on the fly, see *Love's Meinie*, §§ 42–43.]

of choice in feast, from the heaped sweets in the grocer's window, to those of the butcher's back-yard, and from the galled place on your cab-horse's back, to the brown spot in the road, from which, as the hoof disturbs him, he rises with angry republican buzz—what freedom is like his?

75. For captivity, again, perhaps your poor watch-dog is as sorrowful a type as you will easily find. Mine certainly is. The day is lovely, but I must write this, and cannot go out with him. He is chained in the yard, because I do not like dogs in rooms, and the gardener does not like dogs in gardens. He has no books,—nothing but his own weary thoughts for company, and a group of those free flies whom he snaps at, with sudden ill success. Such dim hope as he may have that I may yet take him out with me, will be, hour by hour, wearily[1] disappointed; or, worse, darkened at once into a leaden despair by an authoritative "No"—too well understood. His fidelity only seals his fate; if he would not watch for me, he would be sent away, and go hunting with some happier master: but he watches, and is wise, and faithful, and miserable: and his high animal intellect only gives him the wistful powers of wonder, and sorrow, and desire, and affection, which embitter his captivity. Yet of the two, would we rather be watch-dog, or fly?

76. Indeed, the first point we have all to determine is not how free we are, but what kind of creatures we are. It is of small importance to any of us whether we get liberty; but of the greatest that we deserve it. Whether we can win it, fate must determine; but that we will be worthy of it, we may ourselves determine; and the sorrowfullest fate, of all that we can suffer, is to have it, *without* deserving it.

77. I have hardly patience to hold my pen and go on writing, as I remember (I would that it were possible for a few consecutive instants to forget) the infinite follies of

[1] ["Wearily" was inserted in the reprint in *Queen of the Air*; and a few lines lower, "power" in the original article was there corrected to "powers."]

modern thought in this matter, centred in the notion that liberty is good for a man, irrespectively of the use he is likely to make of it. Folly unfathomable! unspeakable! unendurable to look in the full face of, as the laugh of a cretin. You will send your child, will you, into a room where a table is loaded with sweet wine and fruit—some poisoned, some not?—you will say to him, "Choose freely, my little child! It is so good for you to have freedom of choice; it forms your character—your individuality! If you take the wrong cup, or the wrong berry, you will die before the day is over, but you will have acquired the dignity of a Free child"?

78. You think that puts the case too sharply? I tell you, lover of liberty, there is no choice offered to you, but it is similarly between life and death. There is no act, nor option of act, possible, but the wrong deed, or option, has poison in it, which will stay in your veins thereafter for ever. Never more to all eternity can you be as you might have been, had you not done that—chosen that. You have "formed your character," forsooth! No! if you have chosen ill, you have Deformed it, and that for ever! In some choices, it had been better for you that a red-hot iron bar had struck you aside, scarred and helpless, than that you had so chosen. "You will know better next time!" No. Next time will never come. Next time the choice will be in quite another aspect—between quite different things,—you, weaker than you were by the evil into which you have fallen; it, more doubtful than it was, by the increased dimness of your sight. No one ever gets wiser by doing wrong, nor stronger. You will get wiser and stronger only by doing right, whether forced or not; the prime, the one need is to do *that*, under whatever compulsion, till you can do it without compulsion. And then you are a Man.

79. "What!" a wayward youth might perhaps answer, incredulously; "no one ever gets wiser by doing wrong? Shall I not know the world best by trying the wrong of it, and repenting? Have I not, even as it is, learned much

by many of my errors?" Indeed, the effort by which partially you recovered yourself was precious; that part of your thought by which you discerned the error was precious. What wisdom and strength you kept, and rightly used, are rewarded; and in the pain and the repentance, and in the acquaintance with the aspects of folly and sin, you have learned *something;* how much less than you would have learned in right paths, can never be told, but that it *is* less is certain. Your liberty of choice has simply destroyed for you so much life and strength, never regainable. It is true you now know the habits of swine, and the taste of husks:[1] do you think your father could not have taught you to know better habits and pleasanter tastes, if you had stayed in his house; and that the knowledge you have lost would not have been more, as well as sweeter, than that you have gained? But "it so forms my individuality to be free!" Your individuality was given you by God, and in your race; and if you have any to speak of, you will want no liberty. You will want a den to work in, and peace, and light—no more,—in absolute need; if more, in anywise, it will still not be liberty, but direction, instruction, reproof, and sympathy. But if you have no individuality, if there is no true character nor true desire in you, then you will indeed want to be free. You will begin early; and, as a boy, desire to be a man; and, as a man, think yourself as good as every other. You will choose freely to eat, freely to drink, freely to stagger and fall, freely, at last, to curse yourself and die. Death is the only real freedom[2] possible to us: and that is consummate freedom,—permission for every particle in the rotting body to leave its neighbour particle, and shift for itself. You call it "corruption" in the flesh; but before it comes to that, all liberty is an equal corruption in mind. You ask for freedom of thought; but if you have not sufficient

[1] [Luke xv. 16: compare the notes on the parable of the Prodigal Son in *Time and Tide* (Vol. XVII. pp. 458 *seq.*).]

[2] [In the original paper: "That is the only and final freedom."]

grounds for thought, you have no business to think; and if you have sufficient grounds, you have no business to think wrong. Only one thought is possible to you, if you are wise — your liberty is geometrically proportionate to your folly.

80. "But all this glory and activity of our age; what are they owing to, but to our freedom of thought?" In a measure, they are owing—what good is in them—to the discovery of many lies, and the escape from the power of evil. Not to liberty, but to the deliverance from evil or cruel masters.[1] Brave men have dared to examine lies which had long been taught, not because they were *free*-thinkers, but because they were such stern and close thinkers that the lie could no longer escape them. Of course the restriction of thought, or of its expression, by persecution, is merely a form of violence, justifiable or not, as other violence is, according to the character of the persons against whom it is exercised, and the divine and eternal laws which it vindicates or violates. We must not burn a man alive for saying that the Athanasian creed is ungrammatical, nor stop a bishop's salary because we are getting the worst of an argument with him; neither must we let drunken men howl in the public streets at night. There is much that is true in the part of Mr. Mill's essay on Liberty which treats of freedom of thought;[2] some important truths are there beautifully expressed, but many, quite vital, are omitted; and the balance, therefore, is wrongly struck. The liberty of expression, with a great nation, would become like that in a well-educated company, in which there is indeed freedom of speech, but not of clamour; or like that in an ordinary senate, in which men who deserve to be heard, are heard in due time, and under determined restrictions. The degree of liberty you can rightly grant to a number of men is commonly in the inverse ratio of their desire for it; and a general hush, or

[1] [In the original paper: "deliverance from an evil or cruel master."]
[2] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 229 *n.*).]

call to order, would be often very desirable in this England of ours. For the rest, of any good or evil extant, it is impossible to say what measure is owing to restraint, and what to licence, where the right is balanced between them. I was not a little provoked one day, a summer or two since in Scotland,[1] because the Duke of Athol hindered me from examining the gneiss and slate junctions in Glen Tilt, at the hour convenient to me: but I saw them at last, and in quietness; and to the very restriction that annoyed me, owed, probably, the fact of their being in existence, instead of being blasted away by a mob-company; while the "free" paths and inlets of Loch Katrine and the Lake of Geneva are for ever trampled down and destroyed, not by one duke, but by tens of thousands of ignorant tyrants.

81. So, a Dean and Chapter may, perhaps, unjustifiably charge me twopence for seeing a cathedral;[2]—but your free mob pulls spire and all down about my ears, and I can see it no more for ever. And even if I cannot get up to the granite junctions in the glen, the stream comes down from them pure to the Garry: but in Beddington Park I am stopped by the newly erected fence of a building speculator; and the bright Wandel (Pope's "blue transparent Wandle"[3]), of divine waters as Castaly, is filled by the free public with old shoes, obscene crockery, and ashes.

82. In fine, the arguments for liberty may in general be summed in a few very simple forms, as follows:—

Misguiding is mischievous: therefore guiding is.

If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch:[4] therefore, nobody should lead anybody.

Lambs and fawns should be left free in the fields; much more bears and wolves.

[1] [In August 1857.]

[2] [In the original paper: "unjustifiably hinder me from seeing a cathedral without paying twopence."]

[3] [*Windsor Forest*, 345. For other references to the Wandel, see *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 1 (Vol. XVIII. p. 385); *Lectures on Art*, § 119; *Bible of Amiens*, i. § 1; *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 48; and *Præterita*, i. § 1 ("The Springs of Wandel").]

[4] [Matthew xv. 14.]

If a man's gun and shot are his own, he may fire in any direction he pleases.

A fence across a road is inconvenient; much more one at the side of it.

Babes should not be swaddled with their hands bound down to their sides: therefore they should be thrown out to roll in the kennels naked.

None of these arguments are good, and the practical issues of them are worse. For there are certain eternal laws for human conduct which are quite clearly discernible by human reason. So far as these are discovered and obeyed, by whatever machinery or authority the obedience is procured, there follow life and strength. So far as they are disobeyed, by whatever good intention the disobedience is brought about, there follow ruin and sorrow.[1] And the first duty of every man in the world is to find his true master,[2] and, for his own good, submit to him; and to find his true inferior, and, for that inferior's good, conquer him. The punishment is sure, if we either refuse the reverence, or are too cowardly and indolent to enforce the compulsion. A base nation crucifies or poisons its wise men, and lets its fools rave and rot in its streets. A wise nation obeys the one, restrains the other, and cherishes all.

88. The best examples of the results of wise normal discipline in Art will be found in whatever evidence remains respecting the lives of great Italian painters; though, unhappily, in eras of progress, but just in proportion to the admirableness and efficiency of the life, will be usually the scantiness of its history. The individualities and liberties which are causes of destruction may be recorded; but the loyal conditions of daily breath are never told. Because Leonardo made models of machines, dug canals, built fortifications, and dissipated half his art-power in capricious ingenuities, we have many anecdotes of him;—but no picture

[1] [The original paper reads "impotence and dissolution" for "ruin and sorrow"; three lines lower, omits "for that inferior's good"; and in the last line of § 82, reads "disciplines" for "cherishes."]

[2] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1882, and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 137 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 51, 497).]

of importance on canvas, and only a few withered stains of one upon a wall.[1] But because his pupil, or reputed pupil, Luini, laboured in constant and successful simplicity, we have no anecdotes of him;—only hundreds of noble works. Luini is, perhaps, the best central type of the highly trained Italian painter.[2] He is the only man who entirely united the religious temper which was the spirit-life of art, with the physical power which was its bodily life. He joins the purity and passion of Angelico to the strength of Veronese: the two elements, poised in perfect balance, are so calmed and restrained, each by the other, that most of us lose the sense of both. The artist does not see the strength, by reason of the chastened spirit in which it is used; and the religious visionary does not recognize the passion, by reason of the frank human truth with which it is rendered. He is a man ten times greater than Leonardo;—a mighty colourist, while Leonardo was only a fine draughtsman in black, staining the chiaroscuro drawing, like a coloured print: he perceived and rendered the delicatest types of human beauty that have been painted since the days of the Greeks, while Leonardo depraved his finer instincts by caricature, and remained to the end of his days the slave of an archaic smile: and he is a designer as frank, instinctive, and exhaustless as Tintoret, while Leonardo's design is only an agony of science, admired chiefly because it is painful, and capable of analysis in its best accomplishment. Luini has left nothing behind him that is not lovely;[3] but of his life I believe hardly anything is known beyond remnants of tradition which murmur about Lugano and Saronno, and which remain ungleaned. This only is certain, that he was born in the loveliest district of North Italy, where hills, and streams, and air, meet in softest harmonies.[4] Child of the Alps, and of their divinest lake, he

[1] [For other references to the Cenacolo at Milan, see above, § 54, p. 103; and on Leonardo's dissipation of his energies, compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. Vol. XI. p. 71), and *A Joy for Ever*, § 21 (Vol. XVI. p. 30).]

[2] [For Ruskin's references to Luini, see above, Introduction, p. lxxii.]

[3] [The original paper adds ", or that is accusable in any definite error."]

[4] [For Luini's birthplace, see *Lectures on Art*, § 73.]

is taught, without doubt or dismay, a lofty religious creed, and a sufficient law of life, and of its mechanical arts. Whether lessoned by Leonardo himself, or merely one of many, disciplined in the system of the Milanese school, he learns unerringly to draw, unerringly and enduringly to paint. His tasks are set him without question day by day, by men who are justly satisfied with his work, and who accept it without any harmful praise or senseless blame. Place, scale, and subject are determined for him on the cloister wall or the church dome; as he is required, and for sufficient daily bread, and little more,[1] he paints what he has been taught to design wisely, and has passion to realize gloriously: every touch he lays is eternal, every thought he conceives is beautiful and pure: his hand moves always in radiance of blessing; from day to day his life enlarges in power and peace; it passes away cloudlessly, the starry twilight remaining arched far against the night.

84. Oppose to such a life as this that of a great painter amidst the elements of modern English liberty.[2] Take the life of Turner, in whom the artistic energy and inherent love of beauty were at least as strong as in Luini: but, amidst the disorder and ghastliness of the lower streets of London, his instincts in early infancy were warped into toleration of evil, or even into delight in it. He gathers what he can of instruction by questioning and prying among half-informed masters; spells out some knowledge of classical fable; educates himself, by an admirable force, to the production of wildly majestic or pathetically tender and pure pictures, by which he cannot live. There is no one to judge them, or to command him: only some of the English upper classes hire him to paint their houses and parks, and destroy the drawings afterwards by the most wanton neglect. Tired of labouring carefully, without either reward or praise, he dashes out into various experimental

[1] [The original paper reads: " . . . is required for his sufficient daily bread, he paints . . ."]

[2] [Compare the contrast between Turner and Giorgione in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. ix., "The Two Boyhoods" (Vol. VII. p. 374).]

and popular works—makes himself the servant of the lower public, and is dragged hither and thither at their will; while yet, helpless and guideless, he indulges his idiosyncrasies till they change into insanities; the strength of his soul increasing its sufferings, and giving force to its errors; all the purpose of life degenerating into instinct; and the web of his work wrought, at last, of beauties too subtle to be understood, with vices too singular to be forgiven; all useless, because his[1] magnificent idiosyncrasy had become solitude, or contention, in the midst of a reckless populace, instead of submitting itself in loyal harmony to the Art-laws of an understanding nation. And the life passed away in darkness; and its final work, in all the best beauty of it, has already perished, only enough remaining to teach us what we have lost.

85. These are the opposite effects of Law and of Liberty on men of the highest powers. In the case of inferiors the contrast is still more fatal; under strict law, they become the subordinate workers in great schools, healthily aiding, echoing, or supplying, with multitudinous force of hand, the mind of the leading masters: they are the nameless carvers of great architecture—stainers of glass—hammerers of iron—helpful scholars, whose work ranks round, if not with, their master's, and never disgraces it. But the inferiors under a system of licence for the most part perish in miserable effort;* a few struggle into pernicious eminence

* As I correct this sheet for press, my *Pall Mall Gazette* of last Saturday, April 17th,[2] is lying on the table by me. I print a few lines out of it:—

"An Artist's Death.—A sad story was told at an inquest held in

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[1] [The original paper reads: " . . . to be understood, mixed with vices . . . useless, just because the magnificent idiosyncracy had become one of solitude." The reprint in *Queen of the Air:* " . . . to be understood, his liberty, with vices . . . because magnificent idiosyncracy had become solitude." The text given above is in accordance with Ruskin's marking for revision in his copy of that work.]

[2] [1869. The note was added in that year, when Ruskin reprinted portions of the *Cestus of Aglaia* in *Queen of the Air*. The blanks at this interval of time may be filled up: "Isidore Magnes," "Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square," "M. Antonio van Bever."]

—harmful alike to themselves and to all who admire them; many die of starvation; many insane, either in weakness of insolent egotism, like Haydon,[1] or in a conscientious agony of beautiful purpose and warped power, like Blake. There is no probability of the persistence of a licentious school in any good accidentally discovered by them; there is an approximate certainty of their gathering, with acclaim, round any shadow of evil, and following it to whatever quarter of destruction it may lead.[2]

86. It was in the full persuasion of these facts, and of the consequent necessity of some statement of law for our schools, that I began these papers, hoping they might fall chiefly into the form of discussion. That in such a journal as this I should obtain no answer to so simple a question

St. Pancras last night by Dr. Lankester on the body of * * *, aged fifty-nine, a French artist, who was found dead in his bed at his rooms in * * * Street. M. * * *, also an artist, said he had known the deceased for fifteen years. He once held a high position, and being anxious to make a name in the world, he five years ago commenced a large picture, which he hoped, when completed, to have in the gallery at Versailles; and with that view he sent a photograph of it to the French Emperor. He also had an idea of sending it to the English Royal Academy. He laboured on this picture, neglecting other work which would have paid him well, and gradually sank lower and lower into poverty. His friends assisted him, but being absorbed in his great work, he did not heed their advice, and they left him. He was, however, assisted by the French Ambassador, and last Saturday he (the witness) saw deceased, who was much depressed in spirits, as he expected the brokers to be put in possession for rent. He said his troubles were so great that he feared his brain would give way. The witness gave him a shilling, for which he appeared very thankful. On Monday the witness called upon him, but received no answer to his knock. He went again on Tuesday, and entered the deceased's bedroom, and found him dead. Dr. George Ross said that when called in to the deceased he had been dead at least two days. The room was in a filthy, dirty condition, and the picture referred to—certainly a very fine one—was in that room. The post-mortem examination showed that the cause of death was fatty degeneration of the heart, the latter probably having ceased its action through the mental excitement of the deceased."

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[1] [On Haydon, see Vol. VII. p. 231 n.; Vol. XII. pp. 124, 129, 130, 307; and Vol. XIV. p. 160. For Blake, see above, § 4, p. 56. The original paper reads "ignorant" for "beautiful."]

[2] [Here the passages reprinted in *Queen of the Air* end.]

as the first I asked, respecting the proper use of the black outline, is itself a fact of some significance. For the present I am tired of writing without help; and having stated, as far as I know them, the higher laws which bear on this elementary question, I leave it to such issue as my good editor and his artist readers care to bring it to, until January, when, if nothing hinder, I will again take it up where they leave it for me.[1]

[1] [See above, p. 70 and n.]

CHAPTER VII[1]

[THE LIMITS OF MATERIAL]

87. In recommencing this series of papers, I may perhaps take permission briefly to remind the reader of the special purpose which my desultory way of writing, (of so vast a subject I find it impossible to write otherwise than desultorily,) may cause him sometimes to lose sight of; the ascertainment, namely, of some laws for present practice of Art in our schools, which may be admitted, if not with absolute, at least with a sufficient consent, by leading artists.[2]

There are indeed many principles on which different men must ever be at variance; others, respecting which it may be impossible to obtain any practical consent in certain phases of particular schools. But there are a few, which, I think, in all times of meritorious Art, the leading painters would admit; and others which, by discussion, might be arrived at, as, at all events, the best discoverable for the time.

88. One of those which I suppose great workmen would always admit, is, that, whatever material we use, the virtues of that material are to be exhibited, and its defects frankly admitted; no effort being made to conquer those defects by such skill as may make the material resemble another.[3] For instance, in the dispute so frequently revived by the public, touching the relative merits of oil colour and water colour; I do not think a great painter would ever consider it a merit in a water colour to have the "force of oil."

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. v. pp. 9, 10. January 1866.]
[2] [Compare § 6; above, p. 57.]
[3] [On this subject compare *Seven Lamps* (Vol. VIII. pp. 72–75), and *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 455, with the other passages there noted).]

He would like it to have the peculiar delicacy, paleness, and transparency belonging specially to its own material. On the other hand, I think he would not like an oil painting to have the deadness or paleness of a water colour. He would like it to have the deep shadows, and the rich glow, and crumbling and bossy touches which are alone attainable in oil colour. And if he painted in fresco, he would neither aim at the transparency of water colour, nor the richness of oil; but at luminous bloom of surface, and dignity of clearly visible form. I do not think that this principle would be disputed by artists of great power at any time, or in any country; though, if by mischance they had been compelled to work in one material, while desiring the qualities only attainable in another, they might strive, and meritoriously strive, for those better results, with what they had under their hand. The change of manner in William Hunt's work, in the later part of his life, was an example of this. As his art became more developed, he perceived in his subjects qualities which it was impossible to express in a transparent medium; and employed opaque white to draw with, when the finer forms of relieved light could not be otherwise followed. It was out of his power to do more than this, since in later life any attempt to learn the manipulation of oil colour would have been unadvisable; and he obtained results of singular beauty; though their preciousness and completion would never, in a well-founded school of Art, have been trusted to the frail substance of water colour.[1]

89. But although I do not suppose that the abstract principle of doing with each material what it is best fitted to do, would be, in terms, anywhere denied; the practical question is always, not what should be done with this, or that, if everything were in our power; but what can be, or ought to be, accomplished with the means at our disposal, and in the circumstances under which we must

[1] [For notes on another change of manner in Hunt's later work, see Vol. XIV. p. 383.]

necessarily work. Thus, in the question immediately before us, of the proper use of the black line—it is easy to establish the proper virtue of Line work, as essentially "De-Lineation," the expressing by outline the true limits of forms, which distinguish and part them from other forms; just as the virtue of brush work is essentially breadth, softness, and blending of forms. And, in the abstract, the point ought not to be used where the aim is not that of definition, nor the brush to be used where the aim is not that of breadth. Every painting in which the aim is primarily that of drawing, and every drawing in which the aim is primarily that of painting, must alike be in a measure erroneous. But it is one thing to determine what should be done with the black line, in a period of highly disciplined and widely practised art, and quite another thing to say what should be done with it, at this present time, in England. Especially, the increasing interest and usefulness of our illustrated books render this an inquiry of very great social and educational importance. On the one side, the skill and felicity of the work spent upon them, and the advantage which young readers, if not those of all ages, *might* derive from having examples of good drawing put familiarly before their eyes, cannot be overrated; yet, on the other side, neither the admirable skill nor free felicity of the work can ultimately be held a counterpoise for the want—if there be a want—of sterling excellence: while, farther, this increased power of obtaining examples of art for private possession, at an almost nominal price, has two accompanying evils: it prevents the proper use of what we have, by dividing the attention, and continually leading us restlessly to demand new subjects of interest, while the old are as yet not half exhausted; and it prevents us—satisfied with the multiplication of minor art in our own possession—from looking for a better satisfaction in great public works.

90. Observe, first, it prevents the proper use of what we have. I often endeavour, though with little success, to conceive what would have been the effect on my mind,

when I was a boy, of having such a book given me as Watson's "Illustrated Robinson Crusoe."* The edition I had was a small octavo one, in two volumes, printed at the Chiswick Press in 1812. It has, in each volume, eight or ten very rude vignettes, about a couple of inches wide; cut in the simple, but legitimate, manner of Bewick, and, though wholly commonplace and devoid of beauty, yet, as far as they go, rightly done; and here and there sufficiently suggestive of plain facts. I am quite unable to say how far I wasted,—how far I spent to advantage,—the unaccountable hours during which I pored over these woodcuts; receiving more real sensation of sympathetic terror from the drifting hair and fear-stricken face of Crusoe dashed against the rock, in the rude attempt at the representation of his escape from the wreck, than I can now from the highest art; though the rocks and water are alike cut only with a few twisted or curved lines, and there is not the slightest attempt at light and shade, or imitative resemblance. For one thing, I am quite sure that being forced to make all I could out of very little things, and to remain long contented with them, not only in great part formed the power of close analysis in my mind, and the habit of steady contemplation; but rendered the power of greater art over me, when I first saw it, as intense as that of magic; so that it appealed to me like a vision out of another world.[1]

91. On the other hand this long contentment with inferior work, and the consequent acute enjoyment of whatever was the least suggestive of truth in a higher degree,

* Routledge, 1864. The engraving is all by Dalziel.[2] I do not ask the reader's pardon for speaking of myself, with reference to the point at issue. It is perhaps quite as modest to relate personal experience as to offer personal opinion; and the accurate statement of such experience is, in questions of this sort, the only contribution at present possible towards their solution.

[1] [For Ruskin's early reading of *Robinson Crusoe*, see *Præterita*, i. § 1, and for his "monastic poverty" in the matter of elaborate toys, *ibid.*, § 13.]

[2] [Illustrated by J. D. Watson (of the Royal Water-Colour Society). For Ruskin's appreciation of the work of the brothers Dalziel, see below, p. 149.]

rendered me long careless of the highest virtues of execution, and retarded by many years the maturing and balancing of the general power of judgment. And I am now, as I said, quite unable to imagine what would have been the result upon me, of being enabled to study, instead of these coarse vignettes, such lovely and expressive work as that of Watson; suppose, for instance, the vignette at p. 87, which would have been sure to have caught my fancy, because of the dog, with its head on Crusoe's knee, looking up and trying to understand what is the matter with his master. It remains to be seen, and can only be known by experience, what will actually be the effect of these treasures on the minds of children that possess them. The result must be in some sort different from anything yet known; no such art was ever yet attainable by the youth of any nation. Yet of this there can, as I have just said, be no reasonable doubt;—that it is not well to make the imagination indolent, or take its work out of its hands by supplying continual pictures of what might be sufficiently conceived without pictures.

92. Take, for instance, the preceding vignette, in the same book, "Crusoe looking at the first shoots of barley." Nothing can be more natural or successful as a representation; but, after all, whatever the importance of the moment in Crusoe's history, the picture can show us nothing more than a man in a white shirt and dark pantaloons, in an attitude of surprise; and the imagination ought to be able to compass so much as this without help. And if so laborious aid be given, much more ought to be given. The virtue of Art, as of life, is that no line shall be in vain. Now the number of lines in this vignette, applied with full intention of thought in every touch, as they would have been by Holbein or Dürer, are quite enough to have produced,—not a merely deceptive dash of local colour, with evanescent background,—but an entirely perfect piece of chiaroscuro, with its lights all truly limited and gradated, and with every form of leaf and rock in the

background entirely right, complete,—and full not of mere suggestion, but of accurate information, exactly such as the fancy by itself cannot furnish. A work so treated by any man of power and sentiment such as the designer of this vignette possesses, would be an eternal thing; ten in the volume, for real enduring and educational power, were worth two hundred in imperfect development, and would have been a perpetual possession to the reader; whereas one certain result of the multiplication of these lovely but imperfect drawings, is to increase the feverish thirst for excitement, and to weaken the power of attention by endless diversion and division. This volume, beautiful as it is, will be forgotten; the strength in it is, in final outcome, spent for nought; and others, and still others, following it, will "come like shadows, so depart."[1]

98. There is, however, a quite different disadvantage, but no less grave, to be apprehended from this rich multiplication of private possession.[2] The more we have of books, and cabinet pictures, and cabinet ornaments, and other such domestic objects of art, the less capable we shall become of understanding or enjoying the lofty character of work noble in scale, and intended for public service. The most practical and immediate distinction between the orders of "mean" and "high" Art, is that the first is private,—the second public; the first for the individual, the second for all. It may be that domestic Art is the only kind which is likely to flourish in a country of cold climate, and in the hands of a nation tempered as the English are; but it is necessary that we should at least understand the disadvantage under which we thus labour; and the duty of not allowing the untowardness of our circumstances, or the selfishness of our dispositions, to have unresisted and unchecked influence over the adopted style of our art. But this part of the subject requires to be examined at length, and I must therefore reserve it for the following paper.

[1] [*Macbeth*, iv. 1, 111.]
[2] Compare *A Joy for Ever*, §§ 62 *seq.* (Vol. XVI. pp. 57–61).]

CHAPTER VIII[1]

[PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ART]

94. In pursuing the question put at the close of the last paper, it must be observed that there are essentially two conditions under which we have to examine the difference between the effects of public and private Art on national prosperity.[2] The first in immediate influence is their Economical function, the second their Ethical. We have first to consider what class of persons they in each case support; and, secondly, what classes they teach or please.

Looking over the list of the gift-books of this year, perhaps the first circumstance which would naturally strike us would be the number of persons living by this industry; and, in any consideration of the probable effects of a transference of the public attention to other kinds of work, we ought first to contemplate the result on the interests of the workman. The guinea spent on one of our ordinary illustrated gift-books is divided among—

1. A number of second-rate or third-rate artists, producing designs as fast as they can, and realizing them up to the standard required by the public of that year. Men of consummate power may sometimes put their hands to the business; but exceptionally.
2. Engravers, trained to mechanical imitation of this second or third-rate work; of these engravers the inferior classes are usually much over-worked.

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. v. pp. 33–34. February 1866.]

[2] [On this subject compare *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 46 *seq.* (Vol. XII. pp. 68 *seq.*); *A Joy for Ever* (Vol. XVI.); and *Val d'Arno*, § 65. On the ethics of art patronage, see also *Lectures on Art*, §§ 7, 11, 12; *Ariadne Florentina*, § 140, and *Art of England*, § 196.]

3. Printers, paper-makers, ornamental binders, and other craftsmen.

4. Publishers and booksellers.

95. Let us suppose the book can be remuneratively produced if there is a sale of five thousand copies. Then £5,000, contributed for it by the public, are divided among the different workers; it does not matter what actual rate of division we assume, for the mere object of comparison with other modes of employing the money; but let us say these £5,000 are divided among five hundred persons, giving on an average £10 to each. And let us suppose these £10 to be a fortnight's maintenance to each. Then, to maintain them through the year, twenty-five such books must be published; or to keep certainly within the mark of the probable cost of our autumnal gift-books, suppose £100,000 are spent by the public, with resultant supply of 100,000 households with one illustrated book, of second or third-rate quality each (there being twenty different books thus supplied), and resultant maintenance of five hundred persons for the year, at severe work of a second or third-rate order, mostly mechanical.

96. Now, if the mind of the nation, instead of private, be set on public work, there is of course no expense incurred for multiplication, or mechanical copying of any kind, or for retail dealing. The £5,000, instead of being given for five thousand *copies* of the work, and divided among five hundred persons, are given for one original work, and given to one person. This one person will of course employ assistants; but these will be chosen by himself, and will form a superior class of men, out of whom the future leading artists of the time will rise in succession. The broad difference will therefore be, that, in the one case, £5,000 are divided among five hundred persons of different classes, doing second-rate or wholly mechanical work; and in the other case, the same sum is divided among a few chosen persons of the best material of mind producible by the state at the given epoch. It may seem

an unfair assumption that work for the public will be more honestly and earnestly done than that for private possession. But every motive that can touch either conscience or ambition is brought to bear upon the artist who is employed on a public service, and only a few such motives in other modes of occupation. The greater permanence, scale, dignity of office, and fuller display of Art in a National building, combine to call forth the energies of the artist; and if a man will not do his best under such circumstances, there is no "best" in him.

97. It might also at first seem an unwarrantable assumption that fewer persons would be employed in the private than in the national work, since, at least in architecture, quite as many subordinate craftsmen are employed as in the production of a book. It is, however, necessary, for the purpose of clearly seeing the effect of the two forms of occupation, that we should oppose them where their contrast is most complete; and that we should compare, not merely bookbinding with bricklaying, but the presentation of Art in books, necessarily involving much subordinate employment, with its presentation in statues or wall-pictures, involving only the labour of the artist and of his immediate assistants. In the one case, then, I repeat, the sum set aside by the public for Art-purposes is divided among many persons, very indiscriminately chosen; in the other among few, carefully chosen. But it does not, for that reason, support fewer persons. The few artists live on their larger incomes,* by expenditure among various tradesmen, who in no wise produce Art, but the means of pleasant life; so that the real economical question is, not how many men shall we maintain, but at what work shall they be kept?—shall they every one be set to produce Art for us, in which case they must all live poorly, and produce bad Art; or out of the whole number shall ten be chosen who

* It may be, they would not ask larger incomes in a time of highest national life; and that then the noble art would be far cheaper to the nation than the ignoble. But I speak of existing circumstances.

can and will produce noble Art; and shall the others be employed in providing the means of pleasant life for these chosen ten? Will you have, that is to say, four hundred and ninety tradesmen, butchers, carpet-weavers, carpenters, and the like, and ten fine artists, or will you, under the vain hope of finding, for each of them within your realm, "five hundred good as he,"[1] have your full complement of bad draughtsmen, and retail distributors of their bad work?

98. It will be seen in a moment that this is no question of economy merely; but, as all economical questions become, when set on their true foundation, a dilemma relating to modes of discipline and education. It is only one instance of the perpetually recurring offer to our choice—shall we have one man educated perfectly, and others trained only to serve him, or shall we have all educated equally ill?—Which, when the outcries of mere tyranny and pride-defiant on one side, and of mere envy and pride-concupiscent on the other, excited by the peril and promise of a changeful time, shall be a little abated, will be found to be, in brief terms, the one social question of the day.

Without attempting an answer which would lead us far from the business in hand, I pass to the Ethical part of the inquiry; to examine, namely, the effect of this cheaply diffused Art on the public mind.

99. The first great principle we have to hold by in dealing with the matter is, that the end of Art is NOT to *amuse;* and that all Art which proposes amusement as its end, or which is sought for that end, must be of an inferior, and is probably of a harmful, class.[2]

The end of Art is as serious as that of all other beautiful things—of the blue sky and the green grass, and the clouds and the dew. They are either useless, or they are of much deeper function than giving amusement.

[1] [*Chevy Chase*, line 240 (Percy's *Reliques*).]

[2] [Among the very numerous passages in which Ruskin enforces this point, reference may particularly be made to *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 26), and *Lectures on Art*, § 9.]

Whatever delight we take in them, be it less or more, is not the delight we take in play, or receive from momentary surprise. It might be a matter of some metaphysical difficulty to define the two kinds of pleasure, but it is perfectly easy for any of us to feel that there *is* generic difference between the delight we have in seeing a comedy and in watching a sunrise. Not but that there is a kind of Divina Commedia,—a dramatic change and power,—in all beautiful things: the joy of surprise and incident mingles in music, painting, architecture, and natural beauty itself, in an ennobled and enduring manner, with the perfectness of eternal hue and form. But whenever the desire of change becomes principal; whenever we care only for new tunes, and new pictures, and new scenes, all power of enjoying Nature or Art is so far perished from us: and a child's love of toys has taken its place. The continual advertisement of new music (as if novelty were its virtue) signifies, in the inner fact of it, that no one now cares for music. The continual desire for new exhibitions means that we do not care for pictures; the continual demand for new books means that nobody cares to read.

100. Not that it would necessarily, and at all times, mean this; for in a living school of Art there will always be an exceeding thirst for, and eager watching of, freshly-developed thought. But it specially and sternly means this, when the interest is merely in the novelty; and great work in our possession is forgotten, while mean work, because strange and of some personal interest, is annually made the subject of eager observation and discussion. As long as (for one of many instances of such neglect) two great pictures of Tintoret's lie rolled up in an outhouse at Venice,[1] all the exhibitions and schools in Europe mean nothing but promotion of costly commerce. Through that, we might indeed arrive at better things; but there is no proof, in the eager talk of the public about Art, that we

[1] [See above, "The Study of Architecture," § 8, p. 28.]

are arriving at them. Portraiture of the said public's many faces, and tickling of its twice as many eyes, by changeful phantasm, are all that the patron-multitudes of the present day in reality seek; and this may be supplied to them in multiplying excess for ever, yet no steps made to the formation of a school of Art now, or to the understanding of any that have hitherto existed.

101. It is the carrying of this annual Exhibition into the recesses of home which is especially to be dreaded in the multiplication of inferior Art for private possession. Public amusement or excitement may often be quite wholesomely sought, in gay spectacles or enthusiastic festivals; but we must be careful to the uttermost how we allow the desire for any kind of excitement to mingle among the peaceful continuities of home happiness. The one stern condition of that happiness is that our possessions should be no more than we can thoroughly use;[1] and that to this use they should be practically and continually put. Calculate the hours[2] which, during the possible duration of life, can, under the most favourable circumstances, be employed in reading, and the number of books which it is possible to read in that utmost space of time;—it will be soon seen what a limited library is all that we need, and how careful we ought to be in choosing its volumes.[3] Similarly, the time which most people have at their command for any observation of Art is not more than would be required for the just understanding of the works of one great master. How are we to estimate the futility of wasting this fragment of time on works from which nothing can be learned? For the only real pleasure, and the richest of all amusements, to be derived from either reading or looking, are in the steady progress of the mind and heart, which day by day are more deeply satisfied, and yet more divinely athirst.

[1] [Compare *Unto this Last*, § 62, and *Munera Pulveris*, § 37 (Vol. XVII. pp. 86, 168).]

[2] [Compare above, pp. 96–99.]

[3] [Compare p. 36, above; *A Joy for Ever*, § 65 (Vol. XVI. p. 59); and *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1871, § 4 (Vol. XVIII. p. 56).]

102. As far as I know the homes of England of the present day, they show a grievous tendency to fall, in these important respects, into the two great classes of over-furnished and unfurnished:—of those in which the Greek marble in its niche, and the precious shelf-loads of the luxurious library, leave the inmates nevertheless dependent for all their true pastime on horse, gun, and croquet-ground;—and those in which Art, honoured only by the presence of a couple of engravings from Landseer, and literature, represented by a few magazines and annuals arranged in a star on the drawing-room table, are felt to be entirely foreign to the daily business of life, and entirely unnecessary to its domestic pleasures.

103. The introduction of furniture of Art into households of this latter class is now taking place rapidly; and, of course, by the usual system of the ingenious English practical mind, will take place under the general law of supply and demand; that is to say, that whatever a class of consumers, entirely unacquainted with the different qualities of the article they are buying, choose to ask for, will be duly supplied to them by the trade. I observe that this beautiful system is gradually extending lower and lower in education; and that children, like grown-up persons, are more and more able to obtain their toys without any reference to what is useful or useless, or right or wrong; but on the great horse-leech's law[1] of "demand and supply." And, indeed, I write these papers, knowing well how effectless all speculations on abstract proprieties or possibilities must be in the present ravening state of national desire for excitement; but the tracing of moral or of mathematical law brings its own quiet reward; though it may be, for the time, impossible to apply either to use.

The power of the new influences which have been brought to bear on the middle-class mind, with respect to Art, may be sufficiently seen in the great rise in the

[1] [Proverbs xxx. 15.]

price of pictures[1] which has taken place (principally during the last twenty years) owing to the interest occasioned by national exhibitions, coupled with facilities of carriage, stimulating the activity of dealers, and the collateral discovery by mercantile men that pictures are not a bad investment.

104. The following copy of a document in my own possession will give us a sufficiently accurate standard of Art-price at the date of it:—

"London, *June 11th*, 1814.

"Received of Mr. Cooke the sum of twenty-two pounds ten shillings for three drawings, viz., Lyme, Land's End, and Poole.

"£22, 10s. "J. M. W. Turner."[2]

It would be a very pleasant surprise to me if any *one* of these three (Southern Coast) drawings, for which the artist received seven guineas each (the odd nine shillings being, I suppose, for the great resource of tale-tellers about Turner —"coach-hire")[3] were now offered to me by any dealer for a hundred. The rise is somewhat greater in the instance of Turner than of any other unpopular* artist; but it is at least three hundred per cent. on all work by artists of established reputation, whether the public can themselves see

* I have never found more than two people (students excepted) in the room occupied by Turner's drawings at Kensington, and one of the two, if there *are* two, always looks as if he had got in by mistake.[4]

[1] [On this subject compare *Notes on Prout and Hunt* (Vol. XIV. p. 403), and *A Joy for Ever*, §§ 97–103 (Vol. XVI. pp. 82–88).]

[2] [For other documents referring to the same series of drawings see *Dilecta*, §§ 25, 26.]

[3] [On one occasion the purchaser of a picture is said to have handed Turner a cheque which did not satisfy the artist. "I have made it guineas, I believe?" said the purchaser; "it was to be guineas, was it not?" "Yes; the guineas are right enough," was the gruff return, "but I paid six shillings for the coach; and that's not down." So Thornbury relates (p. 297, 1877 edition). "Many stories," says the artist's old friend, G. Jones, R.A., "are told of Turner's parsimony and covetousness, but they are generally untrue; he was careful, and desired to accumulate; he acknowledged it, often added to the jokes against himself, and would say, with an arch expression of countenance, when congratulated on the successful sale of a picture, 'Yes, but there is the frame,' or 'the carriage'" (Robert Chignell's *Turner*, p. 42).]

[4] [See above, § 35, p. 88.]

anything in it, or not. A certain quantity of intelligent interest mixes, of course, with the mere fever of desire for novelty; and the excellent book illustrations, which are the special subjects of our inquiry, are peculiarly adapted to meet this; for there are at least twenty people who know a good engraving or woodcut, for one who knows a good picture. The best book illustrations fall into three main classes: fine line engravings (always grave in purpose), typically represented by Goodall's illustrations to Rogers's *Poems;*[1]—fine woodcuts, or etchings, grave in purpose, such as those by Dalziel, from Thomson and Gilbert;—and fine woodcuts, or etchings, for purpose of caricature, such as Leech's and Tenniel's, in *Punch*. Each of these have a possibly instructive power special to them, which we will endeavour severally to examine in the next chapter.

[1] [That is, the engravings by E. Goodall (1795–1870) of Turner's vignettes; for other references to this engraver, see Vol. II. pp. xlii.–xliii. *n.*; Vol. III. p. 300 *n.*; Vol. VI. p. 100. Among other books illustrated by Sir John Gilbert, R.A. (engraved by the brothers Dalziel), were Longfellow's *Miles Standish*, Shakespeare's Works, and *The Book of Job*. By engravings "by Dalziel from Thomson," Ruskin presumably refers to the illustrated edition of Thomson's *Seasons* published in 1859. For Leech, see Vol. XIV. pp. 332–334, the other passages there noted, and *Ariadne Florentina*, § 179. For Tenniel, see *Ariadne*, §§ 93, 179, and *Art of England*, §§ 136, 150–153. In 1862 the brothers Dalziel engraved a series of Birket Foster's drawings entitled *Pictures of English Landscape*. They sent a copy of the engravings to Ruskin, and received the following acknowledgment from him:—

"GENEVA, *August* 12, '62.

"GENTLEMEN,—I am much obliged by your having sent me those beautiful Proofs. They are superb specimens of the kind of Landscape which you have rendered deservedly popular, and very charming in every respect. I wish, however, you would devote some of your wonderful powers of execution to engraving Landscape which should be better than 'charming' and which would educate the public taste as well as meet it. These pieces, however, are peculiarly good of their class—rich, gracefully composed, exquisite book illustrations, and very precious as examples of wood illustration.

"Believe me, sincerely yours,

"J. RUSKIN.

"MESSRS. DALZIEL."

This letter is reprinted from p. 154 of *The Brothers Dalziel: a Record of Fifty Years Work*, 1901.]

CHAPTER IX[1]

[THE THREE KINDS OF ENGRAVING]

105. I PURPOSE in this chapter, as intimated in the last, to sketch briefly what I believe to be the real uses and powers of the three kinds of engraving, by black line; either for book illustration, or general public instruction by distribution of multiplied copies. After thus stating what seems to me the proper purpose of each kind of work, I may, perhaps, be able to trace some advisable limitations of its technical methods.

(I.) And first, of pure line engraving.

This is the only means by which entire refinement of intellectual representation can be given to the public. Photographs have an inimitable mechanical refinement,[2] and their legal evidence is of great use if you know how to cross-examine them. They are popularly supposed to be "true," and, at the worst, they are so, in the sense in which an echo is true to a conversation of which it omits the most important syllables and reduplicates the rest. But this truth of mere transcript has nothing to do with Art properly so called; and will never supersede it. Delicate art of design, or of selected truth, can only be presented to the general public by true line engraving. It will be enough for my purpose to instance three books in which its power has been sincerely used. I am more in fields than libraries, and have never cared to look much into book illustrations; there are, therefore, of course, numbers of well-illustrated works of which I know nothing: but the three I should myself name as typical of good use of the

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. v. pp. 97–98. April 1866.]
[2] [See above, § 37, p. 89, on photography.]

method, are (i.) Rogers's *Poems*, (ii.) the Leipsic edition of Heyne's *Virgil* (1800), and (iii.) the great *Description de l'Egypte*.

106. The vignettes in the first named volumes (considering the *Italy* and *Poems* as one book) I believe to be as skilful and tender as any hand work, of the kind, ever done; they are also wholly free from affectation of overwrought fineness, on the one side, and from hasty or cheap expediencies on the other; and they were produced under the direction and influence of a gentleman and a scholar. Multitudes of works, imitative of these, and far more attractive, have been produced since; but none of any sterling quality: the good books were (I was told) a loss to their publisher, and the money spent since in the same manner has been wholly thrown away. Yet these volumes are enough to show what lovely service line engraving might be put upon, if the general taste were advanced enough to desire it. Their vignettes from Stothard, however conventional, show in the grace and tenderness of their living subjects how types of innocent beauty, as pure as Angelico's,[1] and far lovelier, might indeed be given from modern English life, to exalt the conception of youthful dignity and sweetness in every household. I know nothing among the phenomena of the present age more sorrowful than that the beauty of our youth should remain wholly unrepresented in Fine Art, because unfelt by ourselves; and that the only vestiges of a likeness to it should be in some of the more subtle passages of caricatures, popular (and justly popular) as much because they were the only attainable reflection of the prettiness, as because they were the only sympathising records of the humours, of English girls and boys. Of our oil portraits of them, in which their beauty is always conceived as consisting in a fixed simper—feet not more than two inches long, and accessory grounds, pony, and groom—our sentence need not be

[1] [For Stothard, as the English Fra Angelico, see Vol. V. p. 105, and Vol. X. p. 222.]

"*guarda e passa*,"[1] but "*passa*" only. Yet one oil picture has been painted, and so far as I know, one only, representing the deeper loveliness of English youth—the portraits of the three children of the Dean of Christ Church,[2] by the son of the great portrait painter, who has recorded whatever is tender and beautiful in the faces of the aged men of England, bequeathing, as it seems, the beauty of their children to the genius of his child.[3]

107. The second book which I named, Heyne's *Virgil*,[4] shows, though unequally and insufficiently, what might be done by line engraving to give vital image of classical design, and symbol of classical thought. It is profoundly to be regretted that none of these old and well-illustrated classics can be put frankly into the hands of youth; while all books lately published for general service, pretending to classical illustration, are, in point of Art, absolutely dead

[1] [*Inferno*, iii. 51; quoted also in Vol. XII. p. 123.]

[2] [The portrait of the three daughters of the late Dean Liddell was painted by Sir William Blake Richmond, R.A., then twenty-one years old, in 1864, and exhibited under the title of "The Sisters." A reproduction of it is given in *The Life and Work of Sir W. B. Richmond* (*The Christmas Art Annual*, 1902, p. 9). The artist has printed some reminiscences of Ruskin's reception of the picture: "In 1864 Mr. Ruskin became keenly interested in the work which I was then doing. I had painted two sons of Sir Henry Acland, my life-long friend. The picture greatly pleased the Master. In the same year I painted a portrait group of the three daughters of Dr. Liddell, Dean of Christ Church. The picture was exhibited, and I received from Mr. Ruskin what appeared to me an exaggerated eulogium on my performance, but in the letter a critical anachronism occurred which startled me and amused me at the same time. Here were three modern young ladies seated in a landscape accurately painted from nature, prettily dressed in a modern costume, and upon the details I had expended as much pains as I knew how, particularly I was careful to delineate the very pretty little shoes, with buckles, that the centre young lady wore upon her dainty feet. In the eulogistic letter to which I have referred, Mr. Ruskin wrote: 'My dear Willy, you have made one great mistake. The rest of your picture being so supremely beautiful, why in the name of the devil didn't you paint the damsel's feet instead of her shoes? Perugino would never have committed such a blunder'" ("Ruskin as I knew Him," in *St. George*, vol. v. p. 299). The artist goes on to quarrel with this criticism as perverse. He does not, however, say why it would be more out of date to be without shoes than without hats; nor can it be asserted that Ruskin was wrong in thinking that the feet would have been even prettier than the shoes.]

[3] [For Ruskin's friendship with George Richmond, R.A., and appreciation of his talent, see *Præterita*, ii. ch. ii., and Vol. XIV. pp. 18, 217.]

[4] [*P. Virgilius Maro Varietate Lectionis et Perpetua Adnotatione Illustratus a Chr. Gottl. Heyne:* Lipsiæ, MDCCC. The vignette of the fountain of Arethusa is at vol. ii. p. 611. Ruskin again refers, in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 124 *n.*, to the vignettes in this book.]

and harmful rubbish. I cannot but think that the production of well-illustrated classics would at least leave free of money-scathe, and in great honour, any publisher who undertook it; and although schoolboys in general might not care for any such help, to one, here and there, it would make all the difference between loving his work and hating it. For myself, I am quite certain that a single vignette, like that of the fountain of Arethusa in Heyne, would have set me on an eager quest, which would have saved me years of sluggish and fruitless labour.

108. It is the more strange, and the more to be regretted, that no such worthy applications of line engraving are now made, because, merely to gratify a fantastic pride, works are often undertaken in which, for want of well-educated draughtsmen, the mechanical skill of the engraver has been wholly wasted, and nothing produced useful, except for common reference. In the great work published by the Dilettanti Society,[1] for instance, the engravers have been set to imitate, at endless cost of sickly fineness in dotted and hatched execution, drawings in which the light and shade is always forced and vulgar, if not utterly false. Constantly (as in the 87th plate of the first volume), waving hair casts a straight shadow, not only on the forehead, but even on the ripples of other curls emerging beneath it: while the publication of plate 41, as a representation of the most beautiful statue in the British Museum, may well arouse any artist's wonder what kind of "diletto" in antiquity it might be, from which the Society assumed its name.

109. The third book above named as a typical example of right work in line, the *Description de l'Egypte*, is one of the greatest monuments of calm human industry, honestly and delicately applied, which exist in the world.[2] The front

[1] [*Specimens of Antient Sculpture, Ægyptian, Etruscan, Greek, and Roman: Selected from Different Collections in Great Britain, by the Society of Dilettanti*, vol. i., 1809. Plate 37 is of a head of Niobe in Lord Yarborough's collection, Plate 41 a very poor rendering of the Townley Venus in the British Museum.]

[2] [This is a very elaborate publication by the Government of France: *Description*

a guinea per week, which for them means seven, not six, days; though they do contrive to make Sunday an 'off-day' now and then. The ignorance of aught in the world save ''orses and 'buses' which prevails amongst these stablemen is almost incredible. A veteran horse-keeper, who had passed his days in an omnibus-yard, was once overheard praising the *'Lus-trated London News* with much enthusiasm, as the best periodical in London, 'leastways at the coffee-shop.' When pressed for the reason of his partiality, he confessed it was the 'pickshers' which delighted him. He amused himself during his meal-times by 'counting the images'!"

112. But for the classes among whom there is a real demand for educational art, it is highly singular that no systematic use has yet been made of wood-cutting on its own terms; and only here and there, even in the best books, is there an example of what might be done by it. The frontispieces to the two volumes of Mr. Birch's *Ancient Pottery and Porcelain*,[1] and such simpler cuts as that at p. 273 of the first volume, show what might be cheaply done for illustration of archaic classical work; two or three volumes of such cuts chosen from the best vases of European collections and illustrated by a short and trustworthy commentary, would be to any earnest schoolboy worth a whole library of common books. But his father can give him nothing of the kind—and if the father himself wish to study Greek Art, he must spend something like a hundred pounds to put himself in possession of any sufficiently illustrative books of reference. As to any use of such means for representing objects in the round, the plate of the head of Pallas facing p. 168 in the same volume sufficiently shows the hopelessness of setting the modern engraver to such service. Again, in a book like Smith's *Dictionary of Geography*,[2] the woodcuts of coins are at present useful only for comparison and reference. They are absolutely valueless as representations of the art of the coin.

[1] [*History of Ancient Pottery*, by Samuel Birch, F.S.A., 2 vols., 1858. The frontispieces are coloured plates from vases. The cut at p. 273 is a woodcut of a "Scene of water-drawing from a hydria in the British Museum."]

[2] [*A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*, edited by William Smith, LL.D., 1854–1857. The woodcuts of coins are rough outlines.]

118. Now, supposing that an educated scholar and draughtsman had drawn each of these blocks, and that they had been cut with as much average skill as that employed in the woodcuts of *Punch*, each of these vignettes of coins might have been an exquisite lesson, both of high Art treatment in the coin, and of beautiful black and white drawing in the representation; and this just as cheaply—nay, more cheaply—than the present common and useless drawing. The things necessary are indeed not small,—nothing less than well-educated intellect and feeling in the draughtsmen; but intellect and feeling, as I have often said before now,[1] are always to be had cheap if you go the right way about it—and they cannot otherwise be had for any price. There are quite brains enough, and there is quite sentiment enough, among the gentlemen of England to answer all the purposes of England: but if you so train your youths of the richer classes that they shall think it more gentlemanly to scrawl a figure on a bit of note-paper, to be presently rolled up to light a cigar with, than to draw one nobly and rightly for the seeing of all men;—and if you practically show your youths, of all classes, that they will be held gentlemen, for babbling with a simper in Sunday pulpits; or grinning through, not a horse's, but a hound's, collar, in Saturday journals:[2] or dirtily living on the public money in government non-offices:—but that they shall be held less than gentlemen for doing a man's work honestly with a man's right hand[3]—you will of course find that intellect and feeling cannot be had when you want them. But if you like to train some of your best youth into scholarly artists,—men of the temper of Leonardo, of Holbein, of Dürer, or of Velasquez, instead

[1] [See, for instance, *A Joy for Ever*, §§ 20, 21 (Vol. XVI. p. 30).]

[2] ["The grinning match is performed by two or more persons, each of them having his head thrust through a horse's collar" (Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, vol. iv. ch. iii. § 31). Ruskin substitutes a hound's collar, in reference presumably to the cynicism of some Saturday reviewers. In "government non-offices" he is thinking perhaps of Dickens's Circumlocution Office, and its art of "How not to do it."]

[3] [Compare Vol. XII. p. 343, and Vol. XVI. p. 98.]

of decomposing them into the early efflorescences and putrescences of idle clerks, sharp lawyers, soft curates, and rotten journalists,—you will find that you can always get a good line drawn when you need it, without paying large subscriptions to schools of Art.

114. (III.) This relation of social character to the possible supply of good Art is still more direct when we include in our survey the mass of illustration coming under the general head of dramatic caricature[1]—caricature, that is to say, involving right understanding of the true grotesque in human life; caricature of which the worth or harmfulness cannot be estimated, unless we can first somewhat answer the wide question, What is the meaning and worth of English laughter? I say, "of English laughter," because if you can well determine the value of that, you determine the value of the true laughter of all men—the English laugh being the purest and truest in the metal that can be minted. And indeed only Heaven can know what the country owes to it, on the lips of such men as Sydney Smith and Thomas Hood.[2] For indeed the true wit of all countries, but especially English wit (because the openest), must always be essentially on the side of truth—for the nature of wit is one with truth. Sentiment may be false—reasoning false—reverence false—love false,—everything false except wit; that *must* be true—and even if it is ever harmful, it is as divided against itself—a small truth undermining a mightier.

On the other hand, the spirit of levity, and habit of mockery, are among the chief instruments of final ruin both to individual and nations. I believe no business will ever be rightly done by a laughing Parliament: and that the public perception of vice or of folly which only finds expression in caricature, neither reforms the one, nor instructs

[1] [For other passages in which caricature is discussed, see Vol. VI. pp. 469–474; and Vol. XIV. pp. 490–491.]

[2] [For Ruskin's appreciation of Sydney Smith, see Vol. VII. p. 357 *n.*; for Hood, Vol. VI. p. 471, and the other passages there noted: see also Vol. XVIII. p. 79 *n.*]

the other. No man is fit for much, we know, "who has not a good laugh in him"[1]—but a sad wise valour is the only complexion for a leader; and if there was ever a time for laughing in this dark and hollow world, I do not think it is now. This is a wide subject, and I must follow it in another place;[2] for our present purpose, all that needs to be noted is that, for the expression of true humour, few and imperfect lines are often sufficient, and that in this direction lies the only opening for the serviceable presentation of amateur work to public notice.

115. I have said nothing of lithography, because, with the exception of Samuel Prout's sketches, no work of standard Art-value has ever been produced by it, nor can be: its opaque and gritty texture being wholly offensive to the eye of any well-trained artist. Its use in connection with colour is, of course, foreign to our present subject. Nor do I take any note of the various current patents for cheap modes of drawing, though they are sometimes to be thanked for rendering possible the publication of sketches like those of the pretty little *Voyage en Zigzag* ("how we spent the summer"[3]) published by Longmans—which are full of charming humour, character, and freshness of expression; and might have lost more by the reduction to the severe terms of wood-cutting than they do by the ragged interruptions of line which are an inevitable defect in nearly all these cheap processes. It will be enough, therefore, for all serious purpose, that we confine ourselves to the study of the black line, as produced in steel and wood; and I will endeavour in the next paper[4] to set down some of the technical laws belonging to each mode of its employment.

[1] [See Carlyle: *Sartor Resartus*, book i. ch. iv.]

[2] [See *Time and Tide* (written in the following year), § 19 (Vol. XVII. p. 335).]

[3] [*How we Spent the Summer; or, a Voyage en Zigzag*, 1864 (4th ed., 1871). The book, published anonymously, was by Miss L. Tuckett.]

[4] [The present paper was, however, the last: see the Introduction to Vol. XVIII. (p. xxxvi.).]

IV

THE RELATION OF NATIONAL ETHICS TO NATIONAL ARTS

(1867)

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This lecture was reported briefly in the *Cambridge Chronicle*, May 25, 1867.

The greater part of § 1 was printed from the author's MS., with passages from the newspaper, in W. G. Collingwood's *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, 1893, vol. ii. pp. 75–77, and again in the one-volume edition of that book, 1900, pp. 240–241.

The lecture is now for the first time printed from the author's manuscript. Some passages in the MS. are struck through, probably as being marked for omission, on account of time, in delivery. The lecture is here given in its entirety, as written. Two passages, however, are missing: see § 24, p. 182; and § 32, p. 188.]

LECTURE

(SIR ROBERT REDE'S)

ON THE RELATION OF NATIONAL ETHICS TO NATIONAL ARTS

(Delivered at the Senate House, Cambridge, Friday, May 24, 1867.)

1. On entering on the duty to-day entrusted to me, I should hold it little respectful to my audience if I disturbed them by expressions of the diffidence which they know that I must feel in first speaking in this Senate House[1]—diffidence which might well have prevented me from accepting such duty, but ought not to interfere with my endeavour simply to fulfil it. Nevertheless, lest the direction which I have been led to give to my discourse, and the narrow limits within which I am compelled to confine the treatment of its subject may seem in any wise inconsistent with the purpose of the Founder of this Lecture[2]—or with the expectations of those by whose authority I am appointed to deliver it—let me at once say that I obeyed their command, not thinking myself able to teach any dogma in the philosophy of the arts which could be of new interest to the members of this University, but only that I might obtain the sanction of their audience for the enforcement upon other minds of the truth which, after thirty years spent in the study of art—not dishonestly, however feebly—is manifest to me as the clearest of all that I have learned, and

[1] [Ruskin's earlier lecture at Cambridge (1858) was given in the town, at the School of Art. For his visits to Cambridge, see Vol. IX. p. xlvii.; Vol. XIII. p. 430; Vol. XVI. pp. xx., xxxvi.–xxxvii.]

[2] [Sir Robert Rede (died 1519), Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas. He founded three public lectureships at Cambridge, the endowment being reorganised in 1858, when it was directed that one lecture should be delivered annually by a man of eminence in science or literature.]

urged upon me as the most vital of all I have to declare—namely, that the faculty for art is not one which we can separately cultivate, still less, in the exercise of it, a gift which can be learned by imitation or direction, but that in this faculty we are to hail a visible sign of national virtue; it springs from such virtue without fail or stint, and no artificial stimulus can produce anything but a semblance and mockery.

2. And it seems to me especially necessary to insist upon this truth at present, because, though there never was a time when more efforts were used to make known the principles of art, or to exhibit and communicate its invention, there never also was a time when so much was done for vanity, and so little for love—so much in petulant thirst for pleasure, or malignant greed of gain; so little with any true joy in the treasures of the past or any true sense of our debt to the future—that debt and pledge, under which we are bound to those who come after us, that, for the sake of their prosperity and their lineal pride, every work as well as every deed of our hands shall be in their memory honourable, and for their service enduring. I too sorrowfully repeat that I see little work done in this spirit, or in the faith that its own power must begin in the purging of the heart, out of whose abundance[1] lips speak and hands labour.

3. On such simple thesis, therefore, I will ask your leave to dwell to-day. It is only as having always endeavoured to give assurance of this that I was able to hear in happy pride the gracious words with which you yesterday admitted me to the mighty trust of fellowship in your ancient University,[2] and it is only as endeavouring to teach this that I hope in future to be of service among men, or desire to be remembered by them.

The proposition, then, which it will be my object to

[1] [Matthew xii. 34: compare below, § 33, pp. 188–189; and p. 209.]

[2] [The honorary degree of LL.D. had been conferred on Ruskin: see Introduction, above, p. xxvii.]

demonstrate in the present lecture, is that, all Art being the Formative or directing Action of a Spirit, whatever character the spirit itself has must be manifested in the Energy or Deed of it, and makes the deed itself Bad or Good.

A thing may be, in the abstract, well or ill done mechanically, but well or ill done artistically, only as the subject of character in energy.

4. But no brief definition will embrace the whole truth in this matter. In the most general English terms we must say, Good art is the Formative energy of a good spirit. Then, whatever special or subordinate meanings we agree to attach to the term good, in all meanings of it the same proposition is true that the character of the Being is also that of its act and energy. By vicious art is properly signified that which is produced by a vicious soul; a just and strong person cannot produce it; every deed and force proceeding from him must be noble, effective, and strong. Similarly, pure and right art is that which is produced by a just and intelligent person; a false or foolish person cannot produce it, he can only produce a semblance and effigy of it. But inasmuch as the being of man is mixed of good and evil inextricably, the art which it produces is inextricably mixed also; and the better part being not only obliged to work in companionship with, but in some sort to work down through, the evil, using it as its instrument, or being obscured by it as by a dark glass, a convincing demonstration of the real roots and causes of action becomes possible only to closest analysis. To show the machinery and involution of power against power for good and evil, all colossal, in the mind of one great artist, Correggio or Mantegna, or Leonardo, would alone take the time you can grant me for speaking.

5. You will be disposed at this point, however, to answer me and say, It is of course easy for you to define good art as the work of a good man. But we do not grant you the right to assume such a definition. You have to show what absolute Goodness is in the art, and then what absolute

Goodness is in the spirit; and then, if what you would say be true, you should be able to prove by example that one is the product of the other. Indeed this *is* the way I would deal with the matter if I had time, but for the practical end in view I must be content with briefest assertion, for your own after trial. There is, indeed, an absolute right and wrong in art (the doubt of these has been the chief cause of our failures and errors). There is right painting, and wrong painting; right music, and wrong music; right gesture, and wrong gesture. Keeping, for example, to the art most generally known, there is a kind of music which is balanced, reserved, constructive, inventive, complete, pure, and lovely. There is, on the other hand, a kind of music which is unsymmetrical, intemperate, unconstructive, unimaginative, incomplete, sensual, undelightful. Every one of the words by which I express these absolute merits and demerits attaches itself justly also to the quality of soul by which they are produced, and by which they are willingly received. To the order of mind from which they spring they are also acceptable, and the temper by which they have been produced they have also a tendency to reproduce. And this is the great practical truth which I desire to bring before you to-day. We cannot teach art as an abstract skill or power. It is the result of a certain ethical state in the nation, and at full period of the national growth that efflorescence of its ethical state will infallibly be produced: be it bad or good, we can no more teach nor shape it than we can streak our orchard blossom with strange colours or infuse into its fruit a juice it has not drawn out of the sap. And, farther, such seed of art as we sow, such also must we reap;[1] that which is born of lasciviousness begets lasciviousness, that which is shed from folly will spring up into folly, and that which is sown of truth bear fruit of truth, according to the ground it is cast on, some thirty-fold, some sixty, some an hundred.[2]

[1] [Galatians vi. 7.]
[2] [Matthew xiii. 8.]

6. It is therefore no matter of debate whether art shall be taught or what manner of it shall be enforced. If we can teach the palm to bear no clusters or graft the grape on the thorn, we may forbid to a fully developed spirit its creative labour, or artificially instruct a false one to make the products of its labour beautiful. Wherever the intellect of a people is perfectly roused, art must exist; and, when it exists, every failure in the beauty of it is the sure and proportioned sign of an ethical depravity. Nor is it either a question whether art be an important part of the human energy or not; small or great, it is a necessary part. Forgive me if I press to tediousness the similitude of vegetation. I do it not in the least by way of ornamenting what I am trying to say, but only because it is quite the clearest method of saying what I mean. Consider how futile it would be to dispute whether the petals of a plant or its leaves were less vital to it than its root. All these are necessary, the health of any one of these is to be reached only through the ethical health of the whole, and it is a sign of that health. You may judge by pith, by bark, by leaf, by root, by fruit. And you may exaggerate the pre-eminence of any or sacrifice any. You may have more foliage than there should be, or less; you may sacrifice flower to seed, or seed to blossom. So, in the man, it is futile to ask which is the most important of his energies—the active, the reflective, or the poetic; none of these can exist rightly without the rest; any of them may be sacrificed to the rest, but the true health of any one is a sign of the health of all, and can only be achieved from the root upwards. By the sacrifice of all for one, an intensity of achievement is obtainable; but absolute rightness, even in lower accomplishments, only by balance with the higher faculties, as the riding of Cœur de Lion or the Cid[1] would differ from that of a circus rider.

On the other hand, though the apparently greatest

[1] [For these types of chivalry, see Vol. V. p. 198; Vol. XI. p. 79; *Eagle's Nest*, § 240, for Cœur de Lion; and *Munera Pulveris*, § 35 (Vol. XVII. p. 166), for the Cid.]

achievements in philosophy have not been accomplished by athletes, the errors of all philosophy are traceable to its seclusion, and would have been prevented or purged by the mingling of practical energy.

Your true education is not to be in guiding branches, or protecting fruits, though that must be done diligently; but for all barrenness and disease there is but one medicine—"Let it alone this year also till I shall dig about it, and dung it."[1]

And thus it is true of all the arts from the least to the greatest that they spring from the whole humanity, and that their object is the whole humanity. You do not teach a man to run, that he may be a swift locomotive machine with two limbs, but that he may be a strong creature able to move swiftly or slowly as he ought. You do not teach him to talk that he may be an instrument of articulate noise: but that he may be a perfect being, capable of necessary speech to his fellow. Neither do you rightly teach a man to paint, that he may become a binocular camera for the transference of coloured spectra, but that he may be a perfect human creature capable of such command over form and colour as shall communicate truly his human knowledge and his human thoughts. Therefore whatever art, whatever thing we have to teach, we can only teach hopefully by having first a right conception of the whole humanity, compacted by that which every joint supplieth,[2] so that the special thing we desire of it or instil into it may minister truly in subordination to its growing up into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;[3] that is to say, into the humanity which belongs to men as Sons of God, and with respect to which it is commanded to them —"Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect."[4]

7. Nor let it be thought that I use these words as

[1] [Luke xiii. 8.]
[2] [Ephesians iv. 16.]
[3] [Ephesians iv. 16, 13.]
[4] [Matthew v. 48.]

involving reference to any particular aspect of religious faith. These, or words containing the same meaning, would, as you know, be received as true by the masters of philosophy of every nation under the whole heaven,[1] which ever approached the possible dignity of the human being. That possible worthiness never has been nor can be neared but by the attainment of this sense of likeness in us to God as a Father, and love and help given from God to us as His children; and practically and spiritually, if not in words, there is no true prayer of mortal lips, nor any such true act of mortal hands as in the essence and purpose of it means prayer, which does not begin itself with the cry, "Our Father which art in Heaven."

Now, therefore, I shall endeavour first to delineate what I believe the masters of ethics do without dispute accept for the type of a true humanity, and then we may perhaps ascertain what part in the system of it its formative and inventive powers occupy, and so finally deduce some practical suggestions as to the methods of instant dealing with them.

8. Now it is of course easy to throw together in a few words the group of attributes which moralists recognise as indisputably virtues—Purity and Courage, Industry and Meekness, Kindness and Sincerity, we all know to be beautiful and desirable, and to bring with them correlative peace and power. But we are apt to forget that the perfectness of all these is in the balance of them and scope. Courage is not a virtue when it is blind or phrenzied, but when it is provident and deliberate; kindness, not a virtue when it is unjust and reckless, but when it is measured and apportioned; justice, not a virtue when it is without purpose of pity, or when it is hardened by pride, but when it is humble and merciful. The human soul must have all these elements so blent that, as the notes in a harmony, each shall have respect to all the rest, and be altered from its common self by the operation of the rest; and it must

[1] [Deuteronomy ii. 25.]

possess these all *μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς*,[1] not as an animal possesses them naturally, and only comprehending in the range of its virtues the narrow circle of its own progeny or its own recognized protectors and friends, but in all the power and consciousness of human Reason steadfastly honoured, faithfully consulted, and, as a directress or restrainer of action, having respect to whatever man can see, or foresee or remember, from his point of space in the Universe of God.

9. You must let me pause for a moment on those familiar words of the Aristotelian definition of art—*μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς*. I suppose that the words as written meant little more than the reasoning power shown in adaptation of means to ends in special work. But we cannot better the words, only we ought to take them in their widest and highest meaning, and reflect what would be the character of a human spirit governed by true reason, or, if you like to say instead of *μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς*, *ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας*, and translate "by the word of truth,"[2] in the practical employment of its virtues—governed, I say, by such reason or wisdom—its own communicated portion of the Logos, which was in the beginning, and without which nothing was made that was made;[3] the wisdom which in her work has respect to all the Laws, and in her aim to all the creatures of God, which in her perfect humility and her unselfish providence comprehends at once the feebleness of her hands and the infinitude of her sway; the omnipotence transmitted through her weakness which is allied to the whole heaven, and merciful to the whole earth.[4]

[1] [Aristotle: *Ethics*, vi. 4.]
[2] [2 Corinthians vi. 7.]
[3] [John i. 2, 3.]
[4] [The MS. as first written shows an additional passage here:—
"It is this comprehension of the exact place in which we are, and of the relation to God which means also the faithful knowledge of ourselves; and let any man once get that wholesomely, and it will be shown to him that in all the fire and earthquake of his former zeal the Lord was not in the fire, and that his vociferous proclamation of readiness for duty must sink into a still, small voice."
For the Bible references, see 1 Kings xix. 11, 12.]

10. This, then, I take for an ideal of an Ethical perfectness—a harmony, namely, of the virtues on which I need not severally dwell, being by all men recognized—this balanced harmony being energized under a true and reasonable acknowledgment of the place in which we stand, of the circumstances over which we may have control, of the relation of our powers to these and to other beings than ourselves, and of the divine laws which directly govern both us and them.

That is what I would define [as] the fulfilled ἦθος of a man. And then I say that every action proceeding from this ἦθος is good; that every material object framed by it will be good, and that the end of education is to get this ἦθος,[1] primarily knowing that out of it all art, all science, and all political action will spring pure, and that whatever is at present good in any of them, springs only from what portion of such ἦθος there may exist mixed in our evil.

11. And now let me range briefly, as I must, through the circle of the arts, that we may see how this supposed inherent ἦθος, or such portion of it as may exist in us, does verily make all its deeds and expressions good, from the highest to the lowest. Take first the art of language. Words proceeding from perfect ἦθος will be accurate and true, because such a spirit will only seek to find, or to speak the truth. They will be clear, because spoken patiently and compassionately; they will be powerful, because the deliberation and sympathy are habitual to the speaker; they will be made sweet in sound, and beautifully placed by his sense of melody and order.

12. There is no other virtue or art of language producible by art than these; but let me mark more deeply for an instant the significance of one of them. Language, I said, is only clear when it is sympathetic. You can in truth understand a man's word only by understanding him; your own word is also as of an unknown tongue to him

[1] [For education as an ethical process, see Vol. VII. p. 429; Vol. XVII. p. 232; and below, § 38, p. 193.]

unless he understands you. And it is this which makes the art of language, if any one is to be chosen separately from the rest, that which is fittest for the instrument of a gentleman's education. To teach the meaning of a word thoroughly is to teach the nature of the spirit that coined it, and the secret of language is the secret of Sympathy.[1] So that while every other art is in some form of it practicable by the insensitive, the art of language is possible only to the gentle. Observe, I always use the word gentle in its full Latin sense of Gentilis.[2]

18. I have said this will be so; but can it be shown that it is and has been so? Yes; doubtlessly. The principles of beautiful speech have all been fixed by sincere and kindly speech. On the laws which have been determined by sincerity, false speech, apparently beautiful, may afterwards be constructed; but all such utterance, whether oration or poetry, is not only without permanent power, but it is destructive of the principles it has usurped, and wholly injurious alike to speaker and hearer. So long as no words are uttered but in faithfulness, so long the art of language goes on exalting itself; as soon as it is shaped and chiselled on external principles, it falls into frivolity and perishes. This truth would have been long ago manifest, had it not been that in periods of very advanced academical science there is always a tendency to deny the sincerity of the first masters of language. Once learn to write gracefully in the manner of an ancient author, and we are apt to think that he also wrote in the manner of some one else; that his thoughts are borrowed, as ours, for the occasion, and that he led the way in art as we follow in play. But no noble nor right style was ever yet founded but out of a sincere heart, nor can any beauty arise in language which was not first in thought. The grace of Virgil is wholly sincere, it arises out of the temper which dwells so

[1] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 19 (Vol. XVIII. p. 68).]

[2] [*i.e.*, "belonging to the same family or *gens*;" so that what Ruskin means is that like can only be known of like.]

tenderly on the stories of Lausus and Pallas;[1] the precision and restraint of Horace are sincere,[2] they are the natural language of a man of the world living a simple and wholesome life; the mystery of Pindar is sincere, it is caused by the crowding of vague conception into a mind occupied with visions of spiritual agents; the naïveté of Dante is sincere, it is the instinct of a mind sanctified by Love into eternal youth. There is nothing I have to say to-day which I am more anxious that my hearers, especially my younger hearers, should believe and remember always than this: no man is worth reading to form your style who does not mean what he says, nor was any great style originated but by some man who did mean what he said. Find out the founder of a great manner of speaking, and you have found the declarer of some sure facts, or sincere passions; and your whole method of reading will be thus sharpened, for being sure that your author really meant what he said, you will be much more careful to ascertain what it is that he means.

14. Keep this in your mind, especially respecting what will chiefly bear the aspect of fallacy to you in ancient writers—their graceful or imaginative references to their Gods. Don't think that the sweet song of the Nones of December,[3] "Faune, Nympharum," was written by Horace as a modern English gentleman would amuse himself with chime of a Latin verse in a walk through his plantations. It was a solemn expression of thankfulness and prayer for farther protection to a trusted silvan Deity.

Don't think that that promise of a kid to the fountain of Bandusia went unfulfilled,[4] or that the worship which kept Clitumnus[5] pure was no truer a feeling than our weak

[1] [*Æneid*, book x.]

[2] [See what Ruskin says of the sincerity and piety of Horace in *Val d'Arno*, §§ 218 *seq.*; and compare *Queen of the Air*, § 47 (below, p. 348).]

[3] [*Odes*, iii. 18, 1; for another reference to the ode, see Vol. XVII. p. xlviii.]

[4] [*Odes*, iii. 13; for another reference to the ode, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 88.]

[5] [The source of the Clitumnus received divine homage as Jupiter Clitumnus; for its purity, see Virgil, *Georgics*, ii. 146.]

sentiment which would build an ornamental temple by a stream in our pleasure grounds, and presently pollute its waters into blackness that we might rent them for another hundred a year. Above all do not think that because you find in more elaborate song or realistic art a distinctly decorative and formative use of the mythic element, and the principal figures and spectra of the Gods change as it seems under the touch of the hands of an enchanter, or obey the plastic syllables of his lips, that therefore the magician has no faith in or reverence for the visions he has summoned. He could not have summoned them but by his faith; nor is it he that wilfully changes them, but they that express themselves tremulously through his human change, as far-off lights of heaven through terrestrial air.

15. And of yet greater importance is it deeply to know that every beauty possessed by the language of a nation is significant of the innermost laws of its being. Keep the temper of the people stern and manly; make their association grave, courteous, and for worthy objects; occupy them in just deeds; and their tongue must needs be a grand one. Nor is it possible, therefore—observe the necessary reflective action—that any tongue should be a noble one, of which the words are not so many trumpet calls to noble action. All great languages invariably utter great things and command them. They cannot be mimicked but by obedience, the breath of them is only inspiration when it is not vocal but vital, and you can only learn to speak as these men spoke by becoming what these men became.

16. I pass to the next greatest art, that of Music. And as in this the relative science is of the highest complexity and interest, I must at once clear the inquiry from such confusion as the introduction of questions relating to science instead of art would otherwise cause. To every art there is, of course, an attached positive science—to language, that of grammar; to music, that of sound; to painting, that of colour; and to architecture, that of dynamics. A right

ethical state is necessary to the following out of any of these sciences completely, but the connection between morality of temper and the power of ascertaining an abstract truth—such, for instance, as the relation of the pitch of notes to the length of the string—is not direct and constant, whereas the connection between morality of temper and right expression or creation in any of the arts is direct, the one being a function of the other. It is therefore quite possible for a bad man to be a good grammarian, but never a good writer; he may be a good scientific musician, never a good composer; he may be a dexterous disposer of colours, never a good painter; and an ingenious builder, but never a good architect.

17. The want of a right ethical state in the investigation of what I may perhaps be allowed to call the Art sciences, is, therefore, shown rather by a disturbance of the due relation between the art and its science, than by errors in the technical knowledge itself. The vanity and insensitiveness which make knowledge too prominent, or the indolence and want of self-command which shrink from the labour necessary to acquire it, are both forms of one and the same egotism, and continually disgrace an art which otherwise might have been admirable, by the insolent display, or the equally insolent defect, of disciplined skill. But I shall not confuse the immediate subject of our inquiry with any investigation of these modes of technical vice. I suppose in every case the artist to be well trained and duly informed; and so perfect a master of his science as not to be moved to the display of it by his vanity; and I confine myself wholly to the examination of the effect of his ethical state on the forms of production to which he will determine that such science is to be applied.

18. Now, Music rightly so called is the expression of the joy or grief of noble minds for noble causes. The last clause of the definition is almost redundant, for a noble mind does not truly rejoice or grieve but for a noble cause. Nevertheless, in its encounter with accidents of base evil

it is capable of an acute and mortifying pain which cannot be expressed by music; and in its attainment of the various lower forms of material good it may feel for a time great gladness or complacency, not properly expressible by music, so that I leave the second clause of the definition as in some sort necessary to its completeness. I say then that true music is the natural and necessary expression of a kingly, holy passion for a lofty cause; that, in proportion to the royalty and force of our personality, the nature and expression of its joy[1] or suffering becomes measured, chastened, calm, and capable of interpretation only by the majesty of ordered, beautiful, and worded sound. Exactly in proportion to the degree in which we become narrow in the cause and conception of our passions, incontinent in the utterance of them, feeble of perseverance in them, sullied or shameful in the indulgence of them, their expression by musical sound becomes broken, mean, fatuitous, and at last impossible; the measured waves of the air of heaven will not lend themselves to expression of ultimate vice, it must be for ever sunk into discordance or silence. And since, as before stated, every work of right art has a tendency to reproduce the ethical state which first developed it, this, which of all the arts is most directly ethical in origin, is also the most direct in power of discipline; the first, the simplest, the most effective of all instruments of moral instruction; while in the failure and betrayal of its functions, it becomes the subtlest aid of moral degradation.

19. I say failure rather than disease of function. For, strictly speaking, the distinction is not between good music and bad music, but between that which is and is not music. And so in all the other arts, strictly speaking, there

[1] [At this point a page of the MS. is missing, the MS. resuming at (§ 19) "I say failure, . . ." Ruskin having detached the page for use in *Queen of the Air*, § 42 (see below, p. 343). Compare also such passages in *Fors Clavigera* as those in Letters 9 and 83, where he says that "the great purpose of music is to say a thing that you mean deeply in the strongest and clearest possible way;" and that when it ministers to mockery, obscenity, or "artificial and luxurious sorrow," music fails of its function.]

is no such thing as bad sculpture or bad painting. There is only no sculpture and no painting. The distinction in the power of the spirit is indeed between *ἀρετὴ* and *κακία*, but the distinction in the result is only between *τέχνη* and *ἀτεχνία*. The distinction therefore between the natures of exalting and of corrupting music, which the Greeks mythically expressed by the contest between Apollo and Marsyas, and between the Muses and the Sirens,[1] does not depend so much on an actual difference in essence as on a different ethical subordination. In good music the pleasure received by the ear is wholly subordinate to the purpose of expression. In the triumphant psalm of Miriam, or in the lament of David over Saul,[2] the delight of the bodily sense in song, though at its highest pitch, must be conceived as wholly subordinate to the still higher ruling emotion; but when the emotion is lower, or more common, the bodily sense, though that is always degraded together with it, yet maintains a higher relative position, and the moment this bodily sense of pleasure leads, the music is base and corrupting. So long, therefore, as Pindar's expression, *ἀναξιφόρμιγγες ὕμνοι*,[3] is true—as long as the hymn leads and the chord obeys—the music so far forth is exalting, and the meaning of the strife of Apollo with the satyr lies principally in that you cannot say *ἀναξιφόρμιγγες ὕμνοι*; and that in the change from stringed to wind instrument lies essentially the abdication of its authority by the word and the assumption of it by the note. And the worst corruption of music in modern days is not in, as it might at first be supposed, the exaltation of a dangerous sentiment by faithful sound, as in the hymn of the Marseillaise,[4] but it is the idle and sensual seeking for pleasure in the sound

[1] [For Ruskin's interpretation in this sense of the myth of Marsyas, see *Queen of the Air*, § 41 (below, p. 343). For the legend of the Sirens challenging the Muses to a contest in singing, see the note on *Munera Pulveris*, § 90 (Vol. XVII. p. 212).]

[2] [Exodus xv.; 2 Samuel i.]

[3] [The first line of the second Olympic Ode: "Lords of the lute, my songs." Compare *Queen of the Air*, § 41 (below, p. 343).]

[4] [For references to the Marseillaise, see *Queen of the Air*, § 42 (below, p. 344); *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 43; *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 48–49; and *Præterita*, iii. § 79.]

only, without any true purpose of sentiment at all, and often without the slightest effort to discern the composer's intention, or understand the relation in a master's work between the syllable and the note. There is no harm but a real discipline in the purposeful expression of any sentiment which can be set to noble sound. But there is infinite harm in an idle and wanton catching of pleasant cadences with only foolish meaning in them, or none.

20. There is, however, a more subtle form of error in musical indulgence, which is that mythically expressed by the Greeks in the contest of the Sirens with the Muses, and with Orpheus,[1] and which is also in the mind of Plato through all the discussion respecting the two modes of harmony in the Laws.[2] And the same truth is also variously though obscurely delineated in the great myth of the necklace of Harmonia[3]—ὅρμος. Note the connection of the word with ὁρμάω, as well as with εἴρω,—indicating, I say, the error of indulgence when not merely the sound, but the emotion of music itself is sought for the sake of pleasure, and therefore wantonly and unnaturally excited, by the Sirens, who are Goddesses of Desire,[4] instead of by the Muses, who are Goddesses of Instruction. Thus many people imagine that when they are drawn by their delight in the higher forms of musical composition to withdraw themselves for a time from common life and solemnize their hearts by hearing sacred words beautifully sung, there is, at least in the degree in which their true sympathies may be excited, a gain to their moral character. Nay, many of

[1] [For the legend of Orpheus, see above, *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 13, p. 66.]

[2] [See the passage from *Laws*, ii. 700, translated in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 73.]

[3] [Cadmus, having been raised to the throne of Thebes, was presented by Zeus with Harmonia, the beautiful daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, for wife; and the king gave to her the famous necklace made by Hephæstus—which proved fatal to all who wore it. Ruskin interprets this by tracing the degradation of the severe harmony which joins men and builds states (compare the reference to the legend in "The Story of Arachne," § 32: "the first queen of the city was Harmony") to the licentious harmony which is a dissolute force. He finds support for this idea even in the word for necklace (ὅρμος), which is connected with εἴρω (to fasten), but also in another meaning (according to some lexicologists) with ὁρμάω (to be eagerly desirous).]

[4] [See, again, *Munera Pulveris*, § 90 (Vol. XVII. p. 211).]

them would probably assure us, and with perfect truth, that they distinctly felt themselves morally stronger and purer after such pleasure. But that greater strength of the soul, though actual and undeniable for the time, is a dearly purchased gain; it is just what the increase of strength by over-exciting stimulant is to the body, and the morbid and momentary increase of moral sentiment is necessarily followed by general dulness of the moral nerve. So far only, however, is this the case as we have compelled the religious emotion that it may be a servant to our pleasure. There are doubtless persons so lovely and constant of soul that their profane life is artificial to them, and the sacred one natural; whose thoughts are always at home when at their Father's feet, and whose pure lips are then purest when they utter His name. These, through their inmost being, are incapable of any false delight; to them every pulse of accidental passion joins with and deepens the steady current of their life. But between these and the common hunter after pleasure in pathetic sensation, for whom the strain of the cathedral organ is made an interlude to the music of the ballet that he may excite his palled sensation by the alternate taste of sacred and profane, there is an infinite range of gradually lowered faculty and sincerity, receiving in proportion to the abasement of its temper injury from what, to the highest, brings only good.

21. It is not a good thing for a weak and wicked person to be momentarily touched or charmed by sacred art. It is a deadly thing for them to indulge in the habitual enjoyment of it. The *Miserere* of the Sistine[1] sends every one home in a degree hardened, who did not come there to ask for mercy; and the daily chanted praise of the cathedral choir leaves every one who comes not to adore daily less

[1] [The singing of the *Miserere* in the Papal Chapel was in the times before 1870 a great attraction of Holy Week in Rome. "There is terrible fighting at the door of the Sistine Chapel, to hear the *Miserere*," says W. W. Story in his *Roba di Roma*, 1863, vol. i. p. 103; and see "H. M.'s" *Handbook to Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome*, 1897, p. 292. For Ruskin's own impressions of Church music at Rome, see Vol. I. p. 385.]

capable of adoration. And as it is with the religious feelings, so in all others capable of being expressed by sound. If you have them, and desire truly to utter them, music becomes the most perfect utterance; for it is only noble life which can be so expressed. Envy, avarice, malice, cannot be written in music, but loyalty can, and love; and righteous anger and faith, courage and compassion, pure childish cheerfulness, and childish peace; only in these delicate passions and in the earnest disciplines of life can we learn to enter into the chastened sweetness and the ordered perfectness of sound. What remnant of the faculty of pity, of justice, of spiritual joy or grief, there may be left in us, we may by such sounds exalt, if we desire truly to exalt them; but if we seek only the pleasure of the sense, then the music searches for the dregs of good in our spiritual being, and wrings them forth, and drinks them; and thus the modern opera, with its painted smiles and feverous tears, is only the modulated libation of the last drops of our debased blood into the dust.

22. I pass next to the formative arts of sculpture and painting, in both of which two great faculties are concerned, which, though quite as essential in music, are here more visible in function, so that I have delayed until now the indication of their place in the Ethical system: I mean Imagination and the love of Beauty. I have done my best to define the Imaginative Faculty in my written work,[1] and will not attempt farther to define it at present, except in the negative, but nevertheless quite accurate way, that it is the part of a designer's gift which no teaching can communicate.[2] Whatever you can teach, or show any other person how to do, or lay down any kind of scientific rule for, is not imagination. And being thus incommunicable, it is the most precious of all art gifts; it is the essential one which alone gives work intrinsic value, and the value of this literally is infinite. There is no price for it. And

[1] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 219).]
[2] [See above, p. 34, and compare Vol. XVI. pp. 158, 334.]

respecting this imagination there is a widely spread popular opinion, which, like many other popular opinions, is not only at variance with fact, but is at polar reverse with fact. It is thought that imagination is an inventor of pleasant falsehoods, whereas it is, on the contrary, the intensest discriminator of virtue and truth. It is the principal part of that σοφία which is truly the ἀρετὴ τέχνης, and its function is distinctively περὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς ἀληθεύειν; its power depends on the vastness of its archic knowledge, and that knowledge is always ἐπιστήμη τῶν τιμιωτάτων.[1]

28. And hence it follows—and this is one of the massive and foundational truths to which every faithful investigator of art principle will at last plough his way—that all imagination is moral, more purely and loftily moral in proportion to its strength, so that no imaginative work can be unvirtuous or unbeautiful; and high imaginative work is always in every other way helpful and divine. And although, like every other human faculty, this cardinal one is subject to certain conditions of disease, yet its own nature is so pure that any grossness of disease is soon mortal to it; and if by any mischance of fate it is originally given to a man who wilfully uses it unworthily, it soon perishes. When oppressed by adverse external circumstances, and forced against its will to contemplate vicious and base things, it always passes into a form of insanity—only some lower conditions of it, chiefly grotesque, are possible to savage nations or uneducated persons, among whom there are no honourable things for it to know, nor *principia* of things for it to reach—and various abortive and cretinous states of it arise out of the confused influences of vice and luxury on men in whom it has not strength enough to develop itself and shake them off; these morbid states of it are to healthy imagination what the visions of typhoid fever are to healthy memory, and may be instantly recognized by the haunting presence of frightful images,

[1] [Aristotle: *Ethics*, vi. 7. Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 112, and *Eagle's Nest*, §§ 19, 23.]

and especially by a ghastly delight in the contemplation of death.

24. Respecting the other faculty chiefly concerned in the formative arts, the love of beauty, I can also state only the simplest elements of its definition.

[Here three pages are missing from the MS. In reporting the lecture the *Cambridge Chronicle* (May 25, 1867) sums up the passage thus:—

"As to the other faculty essential to sculpture and painting, love of beauty, this is not exclusive like the faculty of imagination, but is more or less the possession of all whose nature has a healthy tone, whilst it is the direct adversary of everything that is associated with cruelty, injustice, worldly greed, etc., and so varies in different men. In proportion to man's human love will be his love of beauty, and it will correspond to his previous ethical condition." Ruskin probably used the pages in *Lectures on Art*, §§ 91, 92.]

These two following laws only—which are indeed constant and sure, and which I doubt not you will willingly admit to be so—I will state, for such narrow completion of the subject as may be at present within my reach.

25. First, that the extent of possible conception of Deity by any man depends on his own pre-existent ethical state. You cannot teach the unloving that God is Love, nor the unjust that He is Righteous, nor the fool that He is Wise, nor the impure that He is Holy. All these names of His attributes have only meaning to us, if our own natures are capable of the quality they signify; it is only by magnifying what we have felt in ourselves that we attain imagination of a spiritual Being greater than ourselves; to the savage fierce from feasts of blood his Deity can only appear as a convulsed monster yawning for prey; to the tenderly nurtured and loving child he appears as a Loving Father. According to the degree in which He grants to His creatures to become like Him is the clearness with which He permits them to see Him as He is, and it is only to the highest and most disciplined states of human intellect and feeling that He at last reveals Himself; and even of that Appearance, what can we deem but that it is as a Shadow to us who are shadows, as a Personal Power shaping and

animating all things? Glorious in Holiness, as conquering Death, and putting strength into dust. Fearful in praises—as so exhaustless, so exquisite, and so inexorable in working—that all Praise of Him must, or understanding must, also be a form of Terror; and Doing Wonders—that is to say, so infinite in range of purpose, ever to us visible; so infinite in the fantasy and fitness of means for their accomplishment; so consummate in the expression of tranquillity over all abiding for ever, that His name must be to us always, Wonderful, Counsellor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, of the increase of whose government and peace shall be no end.[1]

26. Of whose Government and *Peace*. I must rest upon the word. For the second Great Law which we must recognize as inexorable, is that whatever imperfect state of knowledge of God may be granted to the imperfectly constituted soul—a narrow truth, stamped upon narrow being—it can only grow up into a higher truth so long as it is held and acted upon in the peace of a simple, unselfish, and laborious life. There is not any so mysterious or dreadful a part of the history of men as the corruption of religious faiths sincerely held by the vain agonies and vain pleasures of selfish purpose. We do wrong for the most part in accusing men of hypocrisy; they are nearly always deceived themselves more than they deceive others; and then the very strength of their faith communicates itself in some dreadful way to their vices, gives consistency to their ambition, cloak to their covetousness, and liberty even to their lust; for, dark and mysterious as the history of the Dionysiac element is in the pre-Christian ages, it is yet more terrible to see it maintain itself in openness side by side with the imaginations of baptised faith, colouring the page of the psalter with a border of demoniacal and indecent phrenzy,[2] lurking beneath the foliage and flowers of the

[1] [Isaiah ix. 6, 7.]
[2] [See above, pp. 100 and 102, and below, p. 365.]

temple gate, and at last prevailing over accomplished art till the Madonna and the Magdalen are blended together in the undisguised seeking for sensual beauty;[1] and thenceforward the enchantment of Christian art sinks into a foul sorcery, and is struck blind at last with the blindness of Elymas,[2] and goes about seeking some one to lead it by the hand, because it had not understood nor obeyed the word of the great promise of vision: *μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.*[3]

27. In briefest recapitulation, then, the elements of character necessary for the production of true formative art will be, first, brightness of physical life, and the manly virtues belonging to it; then the broad scope of reflection and purpose; then the distinctive gift of imagination; the innocent perception of beauty; to crown all, the perfect peace of an honest and living faith. All this is needed in the nature of the artist himself; and yet it is not enough. Endowed with all these attributes, or at least capable of them, he may still be made helpless by the lower condition of persons and things around him. For it is necessary to his healthy energy that his subject should always be greater than himself. He must not stoop to it, but be exalted by it, and paint it with full strain of his force looking upward. It is fatal to his strength, to his honour, if he is always raising mean things and gilding defiled. He has always the privilege, is often under the necessity, of modifying, or choosing, or contracting his subject, within assigned limitations of manners; but he must always feel that the whole, out of which he has chosen, could he have rendered it, was greater and more beautiful than the part he chose, and that the free fact was greater than his formalism. And therefore it is necessary that the living men round him should be in an ethical state harmonious with his own, and that there should be no continual discord nor dishonour standing

[1] [See Vol. IV. p. 365.]
[2] [Acts xiii. 8.]
[3] [Matthew v. 8.]

between him and the external world. And thus a lovely and ordered unity of civil life is necessary to fulfil the power of the men who are raised above its level; such unity of life as expresses itself palpably and always in the states capable of formative design by their consenting adaptation of a common style of architecture for their buildings, and of more or less fixed standards of form in domestic furniture and in dress.

28. The art of dress itself must not be omitted from our review, for being that of the whole people, it is of all the most closely expressive of its ethical state.[1] Imagine a society of persons healthy in body, reserved and gentle in temper, habitually dignified and graceful in gesture, desiring no conspicuousness which they may not deserve more honourably than by splendours of dress nor any concealment of their position in life, if a humble one, yet having, whatever their position, such self-respect as shall enable them to wear any dress, even the most splendid, without feeling shamed by it. Suppose, farther, that they are sensitive to the subtlest gradations of line and arrangements of hue, and that they are in the habit of living much in the open air and associating affectionately with each other, none desiring to outvie the rest nor refusing the care and time necessary to make their own dress as beautiful as the rest desire. Suppose, farther, that a general sense of propriety and of wise economy governs and restrains the love of splendour, that lives habitually industrious and brave necessitate simplicity of ordinary dress, and dictate such laws as may best preserve the accepted conditions of it from useless innovation. From these ethical states of the national temper a beautiful art of dress will infallibly develop itself; and whatever beauty there is in the dress of any nation at a given period, arises from the partial operation of such virtues in the mind of the persons who set its fashion.

[1] [Compare Vol. VII. p. 428; Vol. XVI. p. 48 *n.*; and Vol. XVIII. p. 40 *n.*]

29. We have now passed in brief review the certain compass of the mental conditions required in a people before it can become capable of noble formative energy. It is an employment of deep speculative interest, to which I must leave you at your pleasure, to trace the evidence of such ethical character, however disturbed or interrupted, in the nature of every race which has produced any immortal art. But it is not matter of speculative interest, but of imminent need and duty, if we wish to direct the labour of our own hands to be serviceable wisely, that we should compare the mental states under which alone it can become of value, with those which we find dominant in ourselves and in neighbouring nations.

30. Unhappily it needs little penetration to detect by certain conclusive signs what the general ἦθος is of every separate body into which the force of European national life is now divided. The ἦθος of the aristocracy of Europe is such that, in every senate, the measures brought under discussion are examined primarily not on their own merits, but with respect to the acquisition or retention of political power in the abstract, and without any, even the most distant, reference to any good to be accomplished by it. And it would be held strange in the most honourable of our assemblies that a man should vote for a measure distinctly and sweepingly adverse to his own interests, or to those of his party, on conscientious grounds.

The ἦθος of the commercial body of European gentlemen is such that they have laid down a code of economical science, founded on the theory that every man will act exclusively for his own interest.[1] The ἦθος of the tradesmen of Europe is such that they fully and heartily believe it impossible for any entirely honest person to live by his business. And the ἦθος of the populace of Europe is such that they will supply soldiers, or submit to taxes, for any war of which the object is distinctly acquisitive,[2] so that, in fact,

[1] [See *Unto this Last*, Vol. XVII. pp. 25, 104 *n.*]
[2] [See *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. p. 480.]

being nothing else than large troops of adverse banditti, they are compelled to live in a state of costly armament of reciprocal defiance.

31. I do not know, gentlemen, what moral rank the masters of philosophy in our own Universities would pronounce persons in these various mental conditions to have attained. But this in my own province I know too well, that men thus minded are capable of no production or acceptance of art deserving the name. That which we possess is either an entirely dead and unintelligent reproduction of past forms of it; or it is a base application of mechanical ingenuities to sensual indulgences; or it is the blighted and unnourishing fruit of a fragmentary and isolated virtue parched by the pestilence—vain fruit, whereof the Mower filleth not his hand,[1] nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom. I know that you cannot but at first feel or suspect this to be a bitter and exaggerated condemnation of the art which surrounds you with so much bright activity and daily pleasantness, nor can I justify my statement now, though I hope, or rather I fear, to be able to do so wholly in the lecture supplemental to this which I have soon to give in London.[2] But if you will consider how much of what we do is directly borrowed or imitated; how much of what we change is caricatured or debased; how much of what we believe to be our own we confess to be inferior to the work of the men of the past ages, though produced under scientific advantages which are to theirs as the noon to the dawn—you cannot but feel how much ground there is for humiliation, and how little clue for the direction of hopeful effort.

32. And even that slight clue we have quitted. There is an impression on the public mind that in order to recover national power in art, some knowledge of its practice should be diffused through the mass of the people.

Now what is really wanted is very nearly the reverse

[1] [Psalms cxxix. 7.]
[2] [See the next lecture in this volume.]

of this. It is not to teach the body of the nation to know something of art, but to teach the artists of the nation to know much of other things. It is not to give a *painter's* education to the populace, but to give a *gentleman's* education to the painter.[1] We have seen that by an artist or painter I mean a person who has the special gift for creative work rooted in affectionateness, in love of justice, and in power of imagination. We must no longer permit the kindest, truest, and most inventive minds in the nation to be the worst educated; and while by their peculiar constitution they are impelled to devote themselves to the finer kinds of manual labour, we must endeavour by the strictest training to inform and influence them with the thoughts which that labour may most usefully express. To understand that the artist is one of the principal officers of public instruction, and to prepare our youth reverently for entrance into the church of painters, as we now prepare them for entrance [into the church of priests], is the first step to the making of art itself [a means of popular education. Then there should be National Museums of Art giving] authoritative presentation to the people of examples of good work and authoritative instruction in the indisputable methods of it. . . .[2]

33. But of these temporary and external remedies I shall speak at length in another place; let me say only here, I hope in the deepest reverence, a few closing words, first to the pupil and then to the master, respecting that which is indeed the only worthy object of the effort of both, the kindling of the inner virtue, of which all true art is the emanation and all true science the instinct; and the purging, with refiner's fire,[3] the heart, out of whose abundance

[1] [See the opening of the lecture on "The School of Florence" in Vol. XX.; and compare *A Joy for Ever*, § 28 (Vol. XVI. p. 35); *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 4 (above, p. 54); and *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 1, 226.]

[2] [Two sheets of the MS. are missing at this point, and the last few lines of § 32 are here conjecturally altered and filled up. The missing sheets were obviously incorporated in the next lecture (see pp. 219 *seq.* and p. 229 *n.*]

[3] [Malachi iii. 2; and for the following Biblical reference, see above, § 2, p. 164.]

lips must speak and hands labour hereafter for ever. To my younger hearers I would desire to mark two forms of trial to which at this time they are in an unprecedented manner exposed. The first and deadliest of these, peculiar to your youth, is the contention of opinions round you, and collateral uprising of questions within your own hearts, respecting the nature of your relations to God, and questions which some of you may waste life in endeavouring to solve, and which others of you—perhaps too many—evade by carelessness of temper. Earnestly against the waste, and yet more earnestly against the carelessness, let me warn you.

34. All such questions are resolvable in the outset into decision between two alternatives, neither of which may be met with lightness of heart.[1] Either you are entering into a life which, however confused and shadowy now, must increase as day follows day into the light of an immortal and irrevocable fate, towards which every tread of your foot is an approach, and for which every act of your hands is a preparation; or else you are born but for a moment into this miracle of an universe, and allowed for a moment the breathing of its air and the sense of its splendour. For a brief astonished pause you may look up to the planets and see them roll, and to the clouds and see them float. You may hear the sound of the sea, and touch the garments of the Earth. The spirit of you expands out of the darkness, like the sheet-lightning of the summer twilight. And all this is with you. It closes, and all this was and is not. One of these alternatives must, I repeat, be true, and if you are men you cannot encounter either of them with a smile, nor steel yourselves by mockery against the hour which must bring you either face to face with Death, or face to face with God. But this you know, that whether you have to prepare for inexorable judgment or for endless darkness, and for one you must, the deeds and methods of life which you will be able joyfully to look back upon

[1] [Compare the author's Introduction to *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. p. 394.]

must be the same, and that of these glittering days of yours, numbered or numberless, no ray should fade that has not seen some strain to scatter the evil and confirm the good and grace in your souls; that so the light of them may at last endure either in the sight of angels, or memory-assisted strength of men. Therefore, finally, whatever your fate is to be, don't jest with it.

35. I reserved for this place, separated from all others, the statement of the fatallest sign among the evidences of our present state of declining virtue, our increasing habit of jesting with circumstances of horror and death. When a nation is pure the aspects of futurity and judgment are always beheld by it with an almost childlike gentleness and earnestness—childlike, inasmuch as in the strong sense of present joy the fear of death seems taken away, while yet the truths of it, and of all that it may involve, are continually made matter of contemplation in solemn painting and solemn song. But when a nation is frivolous and base, it dares not raise its eyes simply to the shade of the horizon, but denies Death, and makes light of Him and of His invitation, going one to his farm, another to his merchandise; and then Death follows us fiercely to the highways and hedges, and compels men to come in[1] to feast with him while they are yet living, with shrouds for their wedding garments.[2]

36. Then the second trial which you have beyond all former extremity to bear, is the temptation to dispeace and tormenting strain of ambition, provoked by the manifold opportunity and approved by the, in this only not incoherent, clamour of an unhappy age, whose hope is only in change, whose satisfaction is for ever removed to what it has not, and whose pride is to be promoted to what it hitherto is not. You can hardly contend with this fatal impulse and possess your own souls in patience, unless you be deeply impressed with this primal truth, that it is not for

[1] [Luke xiv. 23.]
[2] [Compare the following lecture on "Modern Art," §§ 18–20, pp. 212-213.]

you to determine what you are or what you shall be. No effort of yours can add one cubit to your stature,[1] mental or bodily. From the womb, your Maker knew and sealed you, separated you to your place, and gave you your measured power. What you are born and bound to do, and what only you can in truth do, is, knowing both and using them, to take that place and develop within its proper limits that given quantity of special power.

87. If you try to exceed the limits of that appointed strength, you may indeed appear to have prevailed against them all your life long, both to yourself and others, but you are in truth only a puffed-up and bloated creature, for the most part venomously, at the best painfully and perilously, for yourselves and all who trust you. You may indeed by mortgage of the futurity of life give sudden force to its presence, and purchase the crown of instant victory with the despised silver of the crown of your grey hairs, but, mark you, to overpass your limits that way, you must lose eventually more than you gain; you pay compound interest for the advanced wealth, and are in the end, in the casting up and sum of you, found wanting.[2] But this is still the least important part of the question for you. By sharp effort, by vanity, or by cultivating unduly qualities of which others can quickly judge, at the cost of those of which they cannot judge, you may obtain outward position and estimate throughout life entirely above your deserving. Nay, most men would think themselves fortunate in any artifice which procured them such estimate, and in any fortune which gave them, as we say, an opportunity of distinguishing themselves. But, young students, remember, no distinction can be really fortunate to you, except that of being known to others, as to yourselves, precisely for what you are. Greater honour than that is either disquietude, or labour and sorrow, or some form of death. It is a fatal light, which falls on you more than you deserve, as the light on a feeble picture,

[1] [Matthew vi. 27.]
[2] [Daniel v. 27.]

beneath which the colours perish; nay, there is much noble light within you which is as the colours of a photograph, and would wither in the immodesty that displayed it. And all these considerations are yet only the selfish ones. Do I need to warn you against the shame of the consciousness that your petulant and unblessed success must have overshadowed the deserving, and repressed the usefulness of better men than yourselves, and added treachery to imposture? How much happier, how much greater, to keep your place and rank in reverent calm of mind, and to be able to in all time echo the words of the great Soldier,[1] saying fearlessly to others, and proudly in your own hearts, Not tossed up by the spume of fortune, not drifted at the will of the multitude, not by the mischance of competitors, not by the *Dis*grace of others or by my own, but by the Grace of God, I am that I am.

38. And now, last of all, in the most earnest respect let me pray you, the masters of this ancient, majestic, and over the earth hitherto pre-eminent school of human science and thought, to bear with me in patience while I speak a few words which are forced from me by utter sorrow of spirit. For seven past years[2] I have spent what poor life and strength was in me in the effort to declare to whosoever would hear me that all productive prosperity in this Christian nation depended on literal obedience to the command of the Founder of its Faith: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."[3] And every assertion of this truth, whether by my lips or those of any other man, has been invariably met with hissing and derision; so that it cannot but appear to me as if every class of the English nation was at present left by their teachers in ignorance of the nature of the

[1] [St. Paul: "a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy ii. 3); "by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Corinthians xv. 10).]

[2] [That is, from 1860, when *Unto this Last* was written, to the date of the present lecture, 1867.]

[3] [Matthew vi. 33; compare *Unto this Last*, § 44 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 59), and *Val d'Arno*, § 272.]

Kingdom for which they are yet taught mechanically to pray from their cradles to their graves, and of the nature of that Justice of which it is promised that the Famine shall be filled, and the thirst quenched with blessing.[1] While the whole strength of the thoughts of the heathen age after age was bent on the interpretation of the sacred name of Justice, we do not so much as recognise it while we read; and while the childlike astronomy of five hundred years ago[2] read faithfully in the flames of heaven this golden Legend, "Diligite Justitiam qui judicatis terram," we, with the accomplished science of our manhood, do but trace the paths of lessonless or unintelligible stars, nor is any telescope ever raised to resolve the nebula that encompasses the word δικαιοσυνή.

39. Nor indeed is any such interpretation possible unless all our knowledge as well as all our possessions be held in subordination first to the law of holy life, and unless we make it the question of ordeal in our schools of youth not what they know, but what they Become.[3] Nor let it be believed, as it has been believed too easily, that it is in our power to impart the knowledge but not to enforce the habit. Partly in a manly modesty which hates all formal profession of conduct—partly in a manly pride, which early asks to be put upon its trial—it has become the instinct of the English people to look to their universities, not for the education, but the probation of their sons; to dread interference with freedom more than error, and formation of imposed virtue more than sin. But both these fears, just in their origin, become most unwise in their exaggeration; most unwise when they lead us to doubt the possibility of an ethical discipline both in our schools and colleges which shall temper and strengthen the heart of youth before there is yet need to prove it, and in the proof itself have respect

[1] [See Matthew v. 6.]

[2] [The reference is to the words which the souls trace in heaven in Dante's *Paradiso* (xviii.): see *Unto this Last*, § 46 (Vol. XVII. p. 62).]

[3] [Compare § 10; above, p. 171.]

to moral, as the root of intellectual, strength. Nay, better that no proof should be made, no signet set, than that the years which might be fruitful in reverence and purity should be lost in prurient self-assertion, or in the experimental and timid touch of the fringe of the Tempter's garment, from which it is not virtue that will issue, but Death. Who is the greatest, or who the least among our children, may it not perhaps be vain to discern, or to declare; but not in vain would be the assurance that none, here trusted to your shepherding in innocence, went forth from your fold torn or betrayed, and that all who came approved from your tribunal had lived a knightly life, and mixed with no stain of dishonour the dew of their youth. What other record can you sinlessly render of them than this, holding as you do your authority at once from the hope of their dead ancestors, and by the trust of their sires on earth, and by delegation from their Father in Heaven —authority thrice paternal and divine;—called therefore to hear and to answer in your mortal power and measure their prayer and that of all who love them, that you Lead them not into Temptation, but deliver them from Evil?

V

MODERN ART

(1867)

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This lecture was in part delivered at the Royal Institution, Albemarle Street, on Friday, June 7, 1867; the President, Sir Henry Holland, Bart., F.R.S., in the Chair. A mention of the lecture, with the full title as given opposite but without any abstract, appears in the Institution's *Notices of Proceedings*, vol. v. p. 187.

The lecture was briefly reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, June 11, 1867; the report was reprinted in *Igdrasil*, December 1891, vol. iii. pp. 184–185, and thence in the privately issued *Ruskiniana*, part ii., 1892, p. 206.

The report says, "The speaker concluded by a few general suggestions as to what features are desirable in a National Gallery, most of which he did not read, but left for publication in the Proceedings of the Institution." No abstract of the lecture, however, appeared there. It is clear from a passage in *Time and Tide* (Vol. XVII. p. 469) that Ruskin intended to include the lecture in one of his books. This, however, he never did; and it is now for the first time printed from the author's manuscript. Some passages in the MS. were struck through, in order to shorten the lecture in delivery, but it is here given as originally written.]

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF MODERN ART, WITH REFERENCE TO THE ADVISABLE ARRANGEMENTS OF A NATIONAL GALLERY

(*A Lecture delivered at the British Institution*, 1867)

1. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I never began an address under a more painful sense of its needing a long and very sincerely apologetic preface, nor with less time to speak one, for, as it is, I have had the greatest difficulty in bringing what I desired to lay before you into any manageable compass, and I have been forced to set down many things in apparently broken connection, to which I must in the outset try to give tenable clue. The whole body of the public is now interested and agitated by many questions respecting academies, galleries, and exhibitions of art; our preparatory art schools are becoming important national institutions, and their productions a valuable item of national wealth. But in all these efforts one fact seems to me much overlooked, and just the fact which, after thirty years of study of this subject, is of all that I perceived the most clearly manifest to me, namely, that the teaching of art from without is quite unimportant compared to the instinct of it from within; that we cannot by formal instruction obtain anything but a delusive imitation of it, and that all of it which is genuine springs necessarily from the national temper and life.[1]

2. The art of a nation much resembles the corolla of a flower; its brightness of colour is dependent on the

[1] [Compare the preceding lecture and *Queen of the Air*, §§ 102 *seq.* (pp. 389 *seq.*); see also *Sesame and Lilies*, § 34 (Vol. XVIII. p. 88).]

general health of the plant, and you can only command the hue, or modify the form of the blossom, by medicine or nourishment applied patiently to the root, not by manipulation of the petals. I am going to endeavour, therefore, this evening, first to sketch in such brief way as may be in the time possible, some of the main characteristics of our modern European art, in their connection with the phases of temper and moral habit to which they owe their origin, as far as I can understand them; then, in the second place, I shall endeavour to state some of the practical means by which instruction may be given in harmony with [what] is best, and correction of what is dangerous, in these popular dispositions. And I will enter at once on my task with this plea for your indulgence, that if the little I can touch upon in so complex a subject seems to you rightly traced, you must not withhold your consent to it because much must always remain to be explained, nor blame me if, endeavouring in the space of half-an-hour to sketch the scheme of machinery [for] a most important branch of public education, I cannot enter into the detailed question of the ways and means for its immediate establishment.

8. Addressing ourselves, therefore, to discern the inner impulse and temper of our modern art, I would say that its first characteristic is its Compassionateness—its various human sympathy even warping it away from its own proper sources of power, and turning the muse of painting into a sister of Charity. And this is especially shown in the importance which subjects exhibiting the life of the humbler classes have assumed, and by the delicate treatment of these. For in older art poverty was only studied for its picturesqueness—now it is tenderly watched for its mental character; of old we painted only the rags of the poor—but now, their distress. For indeed, though there never was a period in which that distress was more wantonly and widely inflicted by carelessness, there also never was a period in which it was so faithfully and brotherly pitied and helped, when it is truly discerned. The sentence which

Eugène Sue takes for his text in the *Mysteries of Paris*[1]—"Si les Riches savaient"—is indeed the key to all our error and cruelty—"If the Rich only knew."

4. I need only give you one instance—you will remember multitudes—but I name[2] a French painter whose name—like that of Michael Angelo, and of Raphael, and of Titian, and of Rubens—is so curiously expressive of his appointed task[3]—Edward Frère (Edward the Brother). I name him, for though his own work is not now what it was once, he has educated a large school of followers in France, many of them worthy ones, and he has done this because—forgive me if I read you words written of him long ago, for they contain just what I want to say, and it is needless to alter them—because he has "approached the simplest subject with perfect feeling of its great humanity, conscious of all the most solemn pathos which there is in the crowned sorrows of poverty, and calm submissions of toil; interpreting to the full, and for the first time in the history of sacred paintings, the great words of the first Beatitude. For the

[1] [For other references to the *Mystères de Paris*, see Vol. V. p. 372 *n.*; Vol. VI. p. 398; and Vol. XIV. p. 92.]

[2] [The MS. as first written reads:—

"I name the work of Edward Frère (and note for an instant coincidence of names—Michael, Raphael, Tiziano, Rubens, Frère), and I will read this note on the picture of the Prayer. [*Academy Notes*, 1857 (Vol. XIV. p. 143).] But recollect, also, as a fact especially memorable, indicative of this sympathy, [one of] the greatest masters now living in England learned the dialect of the lowest and guiltiest classes of the poor in London, and disguised himself and lived among them until he knew them thoroughly, and then devoted all the remaining energy of his life to redeem them from the habits of drunkenness which he supposed to be the origin of their misery. That is the primal . . ."

For the allusions to Cruikshank, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 25 (above, pp. 76–77).]

[3] [Ruskin was fond of finding this kind of significance in names. Thus in one of his note-books he says:—

"Rubens, of the moon, in Horace, *Odes*, ii. 11, 10. Singular! The names Titian and Rubens' warm moonlight."

And in a letter to his father he wrote (Mornex, March 22, 1863):—

"The great old wrathful legislator's name, Draco, the Dragon, fits exactly as I want—legislation or law of the *worm* and of death—the worm that dies not. There is a curious providence in the names of many great men. 'Titian' is colour and touch, in sound. Shakespeare—what could have been grander? Dante, Spenser, Milton—what sweetness in mere syllable! Shelley—just what he was, sweet, distorted, wild on sea shore, and so on. Michael Angelo—the whole soul of the man in his name."

For the reference here to "Draconian," see *Munera Pulveris*, § 120 (Vol. XVII. p. 120); the passage in Horace is "neque uno Luna rubens nitet voltu."]

poverty which was honoured by the great painters and thinkers of the Middle Ages was an ostentatious, almost a presumptuous poverty; if not this, at least it was chosen and accepted—the poverty of men who had . . . a proud understanding of their own self-denial, and a confident hope of future reward. But it has been reserved for this age to perceive and tell the blessedness of another kind of poverty than this—not voluntary nor proud, but accepted and submissive; not clear-sighted nor triumphant, but subdued and patient; . . . too laborious to be thoughtful, too innocent to be conscious, too long experienced in sorrow to be hopeful, waiting in its peaceful darkness for the unconceived dawn; yet not without its own sweet, complete, untainted happiness, like intermittent notes of birds before the daybreak, or the first gleams of heaven's amber on the eastern grey. Such poverty as this is has been reserved for the age to come to honour it, and to spare."[1]

5. (I.) That is the primal characteristic then of modern art—its compassionateness. It draws the poor instead of the noble. It draws by choice Peasants instead of Kings, Peasants instead of Gods. Or is it indeed in their stead that it draws them? May we not ask at a pause whether it could find elsewhere Gods and Kings to draw? Whether what of kingly and Divine it can find be not mostly among the lowly, and whether what seems a preference of the wretched before the noble, be not a kind of witness that in these days the wretched are the most noble?

6. (II.) Then the second characteristic is Domesticity. All previous art contemplated men in their public aspect, and expressed only their public Thought. But our art paints their home aspect, and reveals their home thoughts. Old art waited reverently in the Forum. Ours plays happily in the Nursery; we may call it briefly—conclusively—Art of the Nest. It does not in the least appeal for appreciation to the proud civic multitude, rejoicing in procession and assembly. It appeals only to Papa and Mama

[1] [*Academy Notes*, 1858 (Vol. XIV. pp. 174–175). Ruskin omits two passages from this extract.]

and Nurse. And these not being in general severe judges, painters must be content if a great deal of the work produced for their approbation should be ratified by their's only.

7. (III.) Connected with this Domestic character is the third, I am sorry to say now no more quite laudable, attribute of modern work—its shallowness. A great part of the virtue of Home is actually dependent on Narrowness of thought. To be quite comfortable in your nest, you must not care too much about what is going on outside. You must be deeply interested in little things, and greatly enjoy moderate things; that is all very bright and right on one side of it, but the morals of home, like its prettiest tapestry, have a wrong side as well as a right, and when we simply transfer that phrase of home morality to art morality, and say that this art of the nest "is deeply interested in little things and greatly enjoys moderate things," we seem to have turned our wrong side outwards. And thus while the pictures of the Middle Ages are full of intellectual matter and meaning—schools of philosophy and theology, and solemn exponents of the faiths and fears of earnest religion—we may pass furlongs of exhibition wall without receiving any idea or sentiment, other than that home-made ginger is hot in the mouth, and that it is pleasant to be out on the lawn in fine weather.

8. (IV.) But farther—and worse. As there is in the spirit of domesticity always a sanctified littleness, there may be also a sanctified selfishness, and a very fearful one. A man will openly do an injustice for his family's sake which he would never have done for his own; and the womanly tenderness, meant by Heaven to comfort the stranger and cherish the desolate,[1] may, in totally unconscious selfishness, passionately exhaust itself in the sweet servilities and delicious anxieties of home. To every great error there is as great an opposite error, and the fault of modesty and simplicity which is blind to every duty but that of the family, and to every need but that of the native land, has

[1] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 86 *seq.* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 136 *seq.*).]

been fatally reversed by the ascetic or missionary enthusiasm which fills the convent quiet with useless virtue, and slakes the desert sands with noble blood.

But between these there is a state of disciplined citizenship, in which the household, beloved in solemn secrecy of faithfulness, is nevertheless subjected always in thought and act to the deeper duty rendered to the larger home of the State. This ideal of citizenship has been always approached in states capable either of great art or wise legislation. From this ideal we have grievously fallen; we have retracted our consciences and affections wholly under the shadow of the roof, and losing the tenure and edified strength of national fellowship, have rounded our interests into petty spheres that clash together like the dissolute pebbles of the beach. To such a nation no policy is possible but one determined by chance, and no art possible but that of petty purposes and broken designs.

9. (V.) Then the next characteristic of modern art, sequent partly upon this privacy and partly on the extent of recent discovery, is its eccentricity. As we live much by ourselves, so we form strong personal characters and prejudices, and these are farther modified by the variety of circumstance induced by modern adventure and invention, while the difficulty of consistent teaching multiplies with our multitudes, and the sense of every word we utter is lost in the hubbub of voices. Hence we have of late learned the little we could, each of us by our own weary gleaning or collision with contingent teachers, none of whom we recognize as wise, or listen to with any honest reverence. If we like what they say, we adopt it and over-act it; if we dislike, we refuse and contradict it. And therefore our art is a chaos of small personal powers and preferences, of originality corrupted by isolation or of borrowed merit appropriated by autograph of private folly. It is full of impertinent insistence upon contrary aims and competitive display of diverse dexterities, most of them ignorant, all of them partial, pitifully excellent, and deplorably admirable.

10. (VI.) And the last of which I would speak, and most fatal, in some of its consequences, of all habits of modern art, is its desire of dramatic excitement. And here I must pause for a moment to explain clearly the difference between constant and dramatic art. Constant art represents beautiful things, or creatures, for the sake of their own worthiness only; they are in perfect repose, and are there only to be looked at. They are doing nothing. It is what they are, not what they are doing, which is to interest you.[1] Perugino's St. Michael in our National Gallery, for instance, or Donatello's St. George (at Kensington), or the Theseus of the Parthenon, or the Venus of Melos, are instances.[2] They are simply standing to be looked at—you have not the least notion what they are going to do or what they are thinking. All the greatest work of the Greeks and all good portraiture of every age is of this kind. Dramatic art, on the other hand, represents an action in some way; the personages of it may be as noble or beautiful as those of the classic school, but they must be doing or suffering something, and the spectator is interested in what is happening, as well as by the beauty of the actors or sufferers. Leonardo's Cena, Michael Angelo's Last Judgment, and Raphael's Cartoons are received examples of dramatic art. Now, of course, you may unite both of these characters. Retaining the perfectness of form which is essential in the classic school, you may add gradually more and more of interest to the action until, as in Titian's Assumption or Tintoret's Christ before Pilate, it becomes, to the ordinary spectator, of dominant attraction.[3]

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says in a similar sense in "Verona and its Rivers," §§ 26–28 (below, pp. 444–445, where he again instances the Perugino as a case in point), and *The Relation of Michael Angelo to Tintoret* (where he instances Donatello).]

[2] [For other references to the Perugino (No. 288 in the National Gallery), see Vol. XV. p. 170 *n.* Donatello's "St. George" at the South Kensington Museum is an ancient cast, in a carved wooden frame of the sixteenth century, from the marble bas-relief at the Church of Or San Michele in Florence; for another reference to it, see *Mornings in Florence*, § 16. For the numerous references to the "Theseus" in the British Museum, see the General Index; and for the Venus of Melos in the Louvre, *Queen of the Air*, § 167 (below, p. 413); *Aratra Pentelici*, § 194; and again *The Relation of Michael Angelo to Tintoret*.]

[3] [For the dramatic, "bustling" quality of Titian's "Assumption," see the *Guide to the Venetian Academy*; for "Christ before Pilate," Vol. IV. p. 274, and Vol. XI. p. 427.]

The best masters introduce it usually with great reserve. In the statue of the Apollo Sauroctonos[1] the character of the Power which cleanses the Earth and Heaven from all impurity is expressed by the very slight drama of killing a Lizard. In Raphael's Parnassus[2] the interest is little more than that of conversation among majestic company. In the Heliodorus the drama equally divides the claim of the whole work, but the great masters never allow more than that divided claim. The abstract majesty of the figures is secured first, whether their act be interesting or not. In vulgar art, on the contrary, the drama or story become principal; the spectator does not care whether the figures are beautiful or rightly executed, he only cares about what is going on.

11. Now this dramatic art is vulgar for two reasons—the first, that vulgar people can enjoy a story though they cannot judge of perfect form or character; and the second, that the nobler a person is as a subject of art, the more interesting it becomes to see rather what he is than what he is doing. The nature and essence of him is eternal and of infinite moment—that is what you want to see. Nothing that he can momentarily do or sustain is of any importance compared with that. Now the entire tendency of modern art is to become dramatic. The lower people of course like it, and inferior painters can produce it. For one man who can paint a beautiful form ten can tell a pleasant story, and ten times ten can tell an unpleasant story. Nevertheless, a great deal of very lovely result has been obtained, on both sides, in humour and in pathos—Wilkie and Leslie,[3] and the schools they have founded (there is an exquisite little piece of quiet drama by Leslie's son in the Academy of this year: "Ten minutes to decide"[4]),

[1] [There are statues of this subject, founded on the work of Praxiteles, in the Louvre and the Vatican respectively.]

[2] [For the Parnassus, see above, p. 103; for an allusion to the "Expulsion of Heliodorus," in another of the Stanze of the Vatican, *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 20.]

[3] [For Ruskin's views on Wilkie, see Vol. XVI. p. 415 and *n.*; and for Leslie, Vol. XIV. p. 37.]

[4] [No. 131 in the Royal Academy of 1867: by G. D. Leslie, now R.A. The picture (painted for Sir Edwin Landseer, and now in the possession of Lady Wantage)

Paul de la Roche[1] and his school—and many excellent German and Flemish painters,[2] among whom I cannot venture to particularize, have contributed greatly to the instruction and comfort of innumerable households; and as the peculiar instinct of a century always has some culminating expression—the landscape interest, which begins in liking to play on the lawn, culminated in Turner—so the dramatic interest, which begins in merely domestic incident, rose into the splendid and passionate effort lately made by the best of our younger painters in religious art, of which I must ask your leave to explain, at the risk of some tediousness, the actual nature.

12. Observe, first, one of the chief ways in which the great masters kept their Dramatic subordinate to their Constant art was by suggesting the action in a quaint and unliteral manner; not as it ever could have actually happened, but as the sign of its having happened, or rather of something greater having happened. Take this sketch of Holbein's, for instance.[3] I cannot show you a grander piece of ideal art. It is not meant here that the angel is striking, or the demon struggling, or the little soul pulling at the scales in any physical manner. All three actions are in some degree purposefully impossible and false to show that they are ideal and symbolical actions, meaning a very different thing from common striking and common weighing. Now there is nothing more beautiful than this kind of reserve as practised by the great men; but an evil consequence followed from it—that people got out of the habit of thinking at all how things did take place or could

represents the troubles of a girl whose father wishes her to marry some one against her inclinations. He stands, a short distance off, on a little bridge with his watch in his hand, having given her "ten minutes to decide." A girl friend is giving her comfort or advice; a servant, with a horse, is at a gate, in the background, waiting to carry the lady's answer. The scene takes place in a garden with a brook running through it.]

[1] [For Paul Delaroche, see above, p. 50.]

[2] [As, for instance, in the painters of the Düsseldorf school, mentioned in Vol. VII. p. 338.]

[3] [Ruskin here showed a photograph of Holbein's drawing (No. 133 in the Museum of Bâle) of the Archangel Michael; with the scales in his left hand, he holds a sword above his head as if to strike Satan, who is trying to weigh down a Redeemed Soul in the opposite scale.]

really have taken place, and, by accepting symbols of drama for true drama, gradually came to regard the truths of human history and religion as if they were all symbolisms.[1] And besides that, a quantity of utterly vile and vapid art followed in imitation of the great school in which the drama was false from real want of understanding or invention and not from reserve. And against this false and decayed school rose up the modern English school of true and literal drama. Turner's picture of Apollo killing the Python,[2] as opposed to the treatment of the same subject on Greek vases, is the first great example of it that I know; but the founder and leader of the school, in its more important relations to Christian art, was Dante Gabriel Rossetti.[3] He was the first who set the example of a living dramatic truth in conceptions of events in sacred history. We will not any more, said he and his followers, think of Christ and the Madonna as they never could have been seen by human eyes. We will not make the figures of them mere illuminated letters for the better glorifying of our own sentiments. We will think of them to the utmost of our power as they were truly seen on the earth—as they lived and moved and suffered. We may think erroneously, but at least we will think honestly and earnestly, and paint what seems to us likeliest to have been the fact.[4]

18. Together with Rossetti, and at first working wholly under his guidance, but differing from him entirely in certain conditions of temperament, and especially in having purer sympathy for the repose of the Constant schools, rose up another, I do not fear to say, great dramatic master—Edward Burne-Jones. He did not begin art early enough

[1] [Ruskin traces this process more at length in the fourth chapter of the third volume of *Modern Painters* (Vol. V.).]

[2] [No. 488 in the National Gallery: see Vol. XIII. p. 122, and the other passages there noted. Ruskin afterwards took a typical Greek representation of Apollo and the Python (on a coin, however, not a vase) for comparison with the dramatic methods of modern art: see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 192, and the plate there.]

[3] [Compare *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, and Lecture i. ("Realistic Schools of Painting") in *The Art of England*.]

[4] [Here the MS. has "Then explain picture." Ruskin showed perhaps his drawing by Rossetti of "The Passover"; or a photograph of the picture "Ecce Ancilla Domini," which he analyses in *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, § 3.]

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Love leading Alcestis

in boyhood;[1] and therefore, in spite of all his power and genius, his pictures were at first full of very visible faults, which he is gradually conquering. In spite of what still remain of these, his designs bid fair to be quite dominant in the English dramatic school;[2] and already, in those qualities which are most desirable and inimitable, may challenge comparison with the best dramatic design of the great periods, and in its purity and seeking for good and virtue as the life of all things and creatures, his designs stand, I think, unrivalled and alone.

14. I did not mean this to be an illustrated lecture, and I only sent in to-day what I could lay hand on. This first cartoon is a sketch for tapestry, from Chaucer, of Love bringing in Alcestis.[3] Alcestis, as you know, is the Greek womanly type of the faithfulness and eternity of Love. She gives up her life for her husband's, and is then restored to him from the grave. In Chaucer the Spirit of Love which leads her is only that of perfect human passion:—

> "Yclothed was this mighty God of Love
> In silk, embroudered full of red rose leaves—
> The freshest since the world was first begun—
> And his gilt hair was crowned with a sun
> Instead of gold;
> And in his hand methought I saw him hold
> Two fiery darts, as the coals red;
> And angel-like his wings I saw him spread."[4]

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[1] [Burne-Jones had been intended for the Church. The "first step in his artistic life" (a series of pen and ink designs) was not taken till he was twenty-one, and it was not till 1856 that, under Rossetti's influence, he finally selected the artistic career. "He was now close upon twenty-three years of age, a time when painters should have mastered the mechanical part of their craft, and he was only at its beginning" (*Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. i. pp. 100, 136).]

[2] [Ten years later Ruskin proclaimed the realisation of such predictions. The work of Burne-Jones, he said, "is simply the only art-work at present produced in England which will be received by the future as 'classic' in its kind" (*Fors Clavigera*, Letter 79); and compare, again, *The Art of England*, Lecture ii., and *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*.]

[3] [Plate VI.; the sketch is now in the Ruskin Drawing School.]

[4] [From the Prologue to the *Legende of Goode Women*. Chaucer wrote, after the first line:—

> "In silke embrouded, ful of grene greves,
> In which a fret of rede rose leves."

The fifth line continues, "for hevynesse and wyghte," and then Ruskin omits two lines. The last line but one is in the original, "Twoo firy dartes, as the gledes rede" (gledes = burning coals).]

But in this design the painter has gone farther into the meaning of the old Greek myth, and he has given the Spirit of the Love that lives beyond the grave—pilgrim love, which goes forth into another country and to a far distant shrine, and thinks to find no resting-place but in heaven—

> "Love that groweth into faith;
> Love that seeth over death;
> Love that, with his loving eyes,
> Looks on into Paradise."

I do not know yet in art the expression of any so beautiful thought as this, respecting the purest source of human valour and virtue.

15. Then this second cartoon,[1] also from the Legend of Good Women,[2] is of the two wives of Jason—Hypsipyle and Medea; and I want you to note in it again the special gift of the painter in seizing the good, and disdaining evil. For in the legend of Medea—as we usually read it and think of it—a common painter would have discerned only a cruel and enraged sorceress. But Medea is more than a Sorceress.[3] Her name means Counsellor, Designer—as the name of Jason means the healer; she is, in fact, the Pallas or Minerva of the lower phases of human art, and her terror is that of Wisdom forsaken or despised, corresponding to the snake-fringed ægis of Pallas herself. Again Hypsipyle is the type of the patience and protective gentleness of the affections—she having saved her father from the rage of the Lemnian women[4]—and the painter has therefore endeavoured to express together these two ideals of gentleness and wisdom, but the last, in the power of it and the authority, dark and inexorable.

16. There is another picture I must name, by Burne-Jones—the Dorothea in the water-colour exhibition; but

[1] [Plate VII.; also in the Ruskin Drawing School.]
[2] [The "Legenda Ypsiphile et Medee, Martiris."]
[3] [Compare *Ethics of the Dust*, § 78 (Vol. XVIII. p. 298).]
[4] [As related by Ovid in the *Heroides*, Ep. vi. When the other Lemnian women put all their men to death, Hypsipyle spared the life of her father, the king, Thoas.]

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The Two Wives of Jason

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before coming to it I have a word or two to say respecting the entire influence of dramatic painting on our modern thirst for occasional display in these great Paris and London exhibitions. This fury for the sight of new things, with which we are now infected and afflicted, though partly the result of everything being made a matter of trade, is yet more the consequence of our thirst for dramatic instead of classic work. For when we are interested by the beauty of a thing, the oftener we can see it the better; but when we are interested only by the story of a thing, we get tired of hearing the same tale told over and over again, and stopping always at the same point—we want a new story presently, a new and better one—and the picture of the day, and novel of the day, become as ephemeral as the coiffure or the bonnet of the day. Now this spirit is wholly adverse to the existence of any lovely art. If you mean to throw it aside to-morrow, you never can have it to-day. If any one had really understood the motto from Keats, which was blazoned at the extremity of the first Manchester exhibition building,[1] they would have known that it was the bitterest satire they could have written there, against that building itself and all its meanings—"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever." It is not a joy for three days, limited by date of return ticket, nor is it ever produced by a man who works for exhibition; I do not say that the best men *will* never work for exhibition, but I do say that so far as they allow any such motive to affect them, their work becomes bad. The best art that at any given time may be produced, is produced by the best men working in peace, not for large bribe of money, not for wide clash of popular acclaim, but for moderate pay and for sober spectators, and out of the abundance of their own hearts;[2] and when a thing is so done, it is an inheritance for ever—nothing can afterwards take its place.

17. For at every national epoch there is a certain virtue

[1] [See *A Joy for Ever*, Preface of 1880 (Vol. XVI. p. 11).]
[2] [Matthew xii. 34: compare pp. 164, 188.]

peculiar to it which, when once rightly embodied, under whatever limitation of knowledge, gives an eternal value to the thing so honourably done. And every year of a nation's life ought to add steadily to this accumulated mass of true ancestral treasure, in which its history should be inscribed—in which, if it really have a history, it is sure to be inscribed—more deeply and brightly than in any books; and thus its houses, its streets, its churches, its places of public resort and public occupation should be gradually increasing in riches of harmonious and intelligent art by every law of intellect demonstrably worthy, and to every healthy instinct of life delightful. From such result, and all possibility of it, we are every day farther receding—art is the monster of a caravan; our exhibitions are neither more nor less than bazaars of ruinously expensive toys, or of pictures degraded to the function of toys;[1] and our real wealth and progress in creative power are indicated only by Babylonian wildernesses of brickfield, white with slime, by a continually festering cancer of waste ground among skeletons of buildings, rotten before they are inhabited, and by the extending procession, wherever there was once cleanliness or dignity and peace, of the unclean paling, frescoed only by the bill-sticker with pictures of talking heads fallen from the guillotine, and advertisements of cheap clothes at the sign of the Bon Diable. Now I assure you solemnly that these squalid spaces of filth and disorder, and these frescoes of the bill-sticker—one more monstrous than the other—and these shops in your main public thoroughfares filled with base photographs and the woodcuts of murder and burglary, which render your penny literature chiefly saleable, these are your true elements of popular education—these, as opposed to the frescoed cloister of the Campo Santo of Pisa and frescoed streets of Padua and Verona—and against this popular education your art schools cannot stand. If you

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says of the seriousness of true art, in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 26).]

teach broad-cast evil in the highway, you shall teach no good in the school.

18. And now from that magnificent popular fresco of the talking head, let me go back to Burne-Jones's Dorothea.[1] I do so that it may illustrate for you this great principle respecting the usefulness or mischief of Dramatic work. So long as the incidents you are required to take pleasure in are pleasurable and honourable, the character of the art is safe; but the moment the incidents are painful or ignoble, you are on steep steps of ruin. Now in that Dorothea, which is nearly a perfect dramatic work, the entire interest is concentrated on the beautiful circumstance of the angel bringing the flowers from heaven. The burial of St. Dorothy is far in the background. Had this same subject been treated by one of the Caracci or by Domenichino[2] the dead body would have been in the foreground with the visible gash through the neck, and the angel with the roses in an imperceptible corner. Now it would be perfectly possible, by no other test than this mode of regarding painful and beautiful incident, to separate for you the schools of all time into great families. More simply, I may say, by their modes of regarding Life and Death, Beauty and Corruption. By no more crucial test could you examine

[1] [No. 12 in the summer exhibition (1867) of the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours: "Theophilus and the Angel: a Legend of the Martyrdom of St. Dorothea." The drawing was again exhibited at St. Jude's, Whitechapel, 1883, when the following explanatory note was given in the Catalogue: "The story tells that when Dorothea, a Christian martyr, was being led out to execution, Theophilus, a young lawyer, had called out mockingly, 'Send me, I pray thee, of the fruit and flowers of that same garden of Paradise, of which thou hast spoken.' Dorothea had promised to grant his request, and had gone cheerfully to death. The picture shows us on the right her sorrowing friends bearing her body to burial, whilst in the centre we see the Roman consul leaving the market-place, where a platform has been erected close to the block for the Roman ladies to see the execution. On the left is Theophilus, no longer mocking, but already with 'a new perception born of grieving love'; and, as he turns, he will see the angel holding a basket of roses and apples, who will say to him, 'Dorothea has sent these to thee, and awaits thee whence they came.' Theophilus, so the story runs, straightway resolved to become a soldier of Christ, and following Dorothea's example, obtained like her the Crown of Martyrdom." The drawing was again shown, by Mr. A. E. Street, at the Burne-Jones Exhibition at the New Gallery in 1898–1899 (No. 72).]

[2] [For the "coarseness" of the Caracci, see *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 254); for the baseness of Domenichino, *ibid.*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 184).]

the schools of literature and art than simply by their mode of regarding Death itself—from the battles of Homer and the gloom of Greek tragedy, through the Trionfo della Morte of Orcagna[1] down to Shakespearian tragedy and Holbein's Dance of Death, and all that is connected with these; and, in evil modernism, through the dissection scene of Rembrandt down to the raft of the Medusa[2] and other typical examples of modern sensational drama.[3]

19. I think it is the strangest form of curse and corruption which attends humanity, but it is a quite inevitable one, that whenever there is a ruthless pursuit of sensational pleasure it always ends in an insane and wolf-like gloating over the garbage of Death.[4] As I have shown you here an instance of the highest reach of modern art, on the sacred side of it, so I have here in my hand some leaves exemplifying this its worst corruption.

I could have brought far worse ones, if I had chosen, out of the work of the man whom the British public has called, almost by acclamation, to illustrate its Bible for it, and Tennyson's *Elaine*.[5] Look at these leaves a little after the lecture, and turn from them to these, and meditate for yourselves upon this most significant fact, that here in religious England this man's work has been mocked and despised, and this man's, Gustave Doré's, received with a shout of devotional enthusiasm.

20. But as you cannot see the leaves at this distance, that you may understand clearly what I mean, I will

[1] [For other references to this fresco, see Vol. V. p. 86, Vol. XII. pp. 112, 146, 224; and for Holbein's "Dance of Death," Vol. V. p. 131, Vol. XV. p. 380.]

[2] [For Rembrandt's "Anatomy Lesson," see above, p. 110. The "Raft of the Medusa," by J. L. A. T. Géricault (1791–1824), was exhibited in London in 1820, and attracted great notice then. It is now in the Louvre (No. 338). For another reference to the picture (there referred to as "The Starving Crew"), see *Lectures on Landscape*, § 43.]

[3] [Here Ruskin continued: "But the sum of all is this, that when a nation is ethically pure and noble . . ." (repeating § 35 in the preceding lecture; see above, p. 190).]

[4] [For other passages in which Ruskin notes the modern gloating over death, see pp. 190, 260.]

[5] [For Doré's illustrations to the Bible, see *Time and Tide*, §§ 31, 40, 47; and for his *Elaine*, *ibid.*, § 102 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 346, 352, 357, 401).]

instance something of the same kind, which you may, most of you, remember. In the old manner of performing *Robert le Diable*, in the great cloister scene, the nuns after they rose out of their tombs, disappeared, and the ballet dancers were substituted for them; you did not see the dead bodies and ballet dancers at the same time. But when this opera was last given in England, so mad had the thirst for excitement of this horrible kind become, that it was thought the audience would not be sufficiently entertained by seeing first the corpses and afterwards the dancing, but you had the entire dance given with a row of corpses holding the torches for it.[1]

21. Now the feeling which rendered it possible for an English high-caste audience to sit and see this, has, of course, penetrated more or less into the whole body of society, showing itself most fatally among the neglected children of the lower orders. May I ask you to get and read carefully this article on "Poor Playgrounds" in *All the Year Round* for May 4th [1867], and note this passage respecting the first visit of four London-bred girls to Hampstead Heath:—

"For some time I could talk to them and interest them; at last, wearied, I left them to talk among themselves. Of the foulness of their talk it would be impossible to write; of the death of all sensitiveness, and substitution of the love of horror for the love of beauty. The least awful part of it was a description of all the bodies that had been taken out of the Paddington Canal when last cleaned, gross descriptions of their appearance, and gross speculations as to their histories. The long curved line of trees, in the first glory of gold-green foliage, showed between their as yet thinly covered branches a mist of blue distance, at which I sat and gazed; and somehow the natural beauty made me feel with a deeper awe the pollution of these young human spirits. So I have often returned, after some hours in the court, with so vivid a sense of the savagery of the people there, that the commonest civilities among educated people have seemed to me lovely."[2]

"With so vivid a sense of the savagery of the people there"—note the words, written by a woman whose whole

[1] [Compare Vol. XVIII. pp. 95, 543.]

[2] [The article, which is unsigned, is by Miss Octavia Hill, and records the purchase of a piece of ground in a very wretched court in Marylebone for a playground for poor children. "It is not the place here to speak of our tenants and

life has been spent, and nearly spent to the death, not in preaching vain words, but in doing brave and tender acts of continual help. Some assertions of mine of the same kind have been lately denied, of which I will only say that there may be other reasons than this inaccuracy of them for my not at present choosing publicly to defend them.[1] But of the visible squalor and misery you can yourselves judge, if you care to judge, when you choose: —"On Tuesday persons were knocked down and robbed of their watches in open daylight, and that even in the best thoroughfares of the most respectable and fashionable parts of London."[2]

22. For the primal and final fact of which to-night I desire to convince you is that the compassionateness, which has been hitherto so much ideal, must be made first wholly practical; that is the true Instinct, the true heavenly passion of this epoch; so far as you obey that by faithful working, so far also all decorative and pleasurable work will become true and lovely in your hands. Disobey that instinct, play with it, seek only dramatic pleasure from it, and you will find that your delight changes into a guilty dream, and that your idle fingers are playing with the fringes of the shroud.

23. The beginning of all ideal art must be for us in the realistic art of bestowing health and happiness. The first schools of beauty must be the streets of your cities, and

the alterations in the cottages, for which, as well as for the entire sum required for the purchase of the playground, we are indebted to Mr. Ruskin. We want fellow-workers greatly. The work requires to be done by constant personal teaching and direction." For particulars of Miss Hill's work, see above, Introduction, p. xxiv., and compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 10.]

[1] [Here Ruskin refers to his record in *Time and Tide* of a conversation in which Carlyle had spoken of the savagery of the London populace, and to Carlyle's public repudiation of the words. The repudiation had been made just before the present lecture was delivered: see Vol. XVII. pp. 480–482. Ruskin, as will there be seen, maintained the accuracy of his report, but he did not pursue the controversy in public—not caring "to lay hands on his father, Parmenides."]

[2] [This is a quotation from a leading article in the *Morning Post* of June 6, 1867.]

the chief of our fair designs must be to keep the living creatures round us clean, and in human comfort—primarily clean.[1] Any Christian nation allowing its poor to remain filthy and sickly, is by that one fact proved to be in so false and hollow a state of mind that it can perceive no moral truth nor technical law relating to higher functions. I have felt and spoken as much as most people about the symbolism of things, and I am bold to say I enjoy and understand as well as other people the pleasantness of church spires, and church music, and church windows, and church clothes, and the like. I will go as far as any of you—there's not a girl here, in the purest glow of her sweet fanciful faith, whom I would not sympathize with and help in due time and order, in her embroidery and her garlanding, and illuminating and text-flourishing, and all the rest of it. But before you come to any of this, there is the first of the Church Sacraments, which you must see to the due acceptance and understanding of; there is the Entrance Sacrament of Baptism, and that—though it means ultimately and virtually much more than the putting away of the filth of the flesh—most assuredly, in the first place, does mean the putting away of the filth of the flesh, and I say boldly that any Baptized creature left to rot in filth, signifies that it has got un-Baptized Creatures to deal with it, who have left it, with Cain's speech on their lips—"Am I my brother's Keeper?"[2]

That, I assure you again—and in these, perhaps for many a day, the last words I shall utter about art[3]—*that* is the beginning of Art as of Religion. Get your lower orders washed and comfortable. Whatever difficulties are in the way of your doing that, are the main difficulties ahead of you in everything. Conquer those, and you will need neither Parliamentary debates, nor Art lectures; leave them

[1] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 138 (Vol. XVIII. p. 184); *Lectures on Art*, §§ 116, 187; *Aratra Pentelici*, § 138; and *Art of England*, § 123.]

[2] [Genesis iv. 9.]

[3] [Compare above, pp. 23, 38.]

unconquered, and every thought, and every voice, will alike be in vain.[1]

24. Now for a population, in a healthy state, there are four kinds of Institutions rightly necessary, partly for their rest, partly for their teaching.

First, in winter there should be warm places—in summer, shady places—where hard-worked people may rest for a little time when they need; and these should be under the continual care of a police superintendent, so that they should be indeed places of rest, orderly and home-like, and undisturbed by the merely curious and idle. I should put some enduring form of mural decoration on the walls and ceilings of these resting-places, and have some flowers about them, and keep them always fresh and cheerful.

25. Then, secondly, there should be public places of amusement for true holiday-makers, and these should be quite distinct from schools, and much more from museums. The British lower public has no very clear notion of the way to amuse itself—does so at present in a very dismal and panic-struck manner; it has a notion of improving its manners and getting useful information at the same time, and so makes its way to the Crystal Palace, and, with its own instincts principally tending towards ginger-beer, hopes also to have its mind enlarged by the assistance of Greek sculpture, always supposing the enlargement of its mind is to tend somehow to the enlargement of pockets, wages, and other substantialities. It relaxes, indeed, towards Christmas-time in these economical views, but becomes in outer aspect even more dismally pensive than at any other period. I went up to the Crystal Palace this last year on Boxing Day to contemplate the recreations, and perhaps some of my audience may remember the strenuous efforts made to obtain at least recreative effect in the interior. In my old studies of architecture I always used to have great regard to the apse of a cathedral,

[1] [Ruskin first wrote ". . . unconquered, and for any good you will get from either, you had better listen to the street hurdy-gurdies."]

and whatever else failed, looked always to the close of the great aisled vista as the principal joy of one's heart. And you know this Crystal Palace of ours is always held up to us—superannuated disciples of the old school of work in brick or in marble—as an entirely glorious and exalted novelty superseding everything done yet.[1] So one has a natural tendency to look also to the apse of this cathedral of modern faith to see the symbol of it, as one used to look to the concha of the Cathedral of Pisa for the face of Christ, or to the apse of Torcello for the figure of the Madonna.[2] Well, do you recollect what occupied the place of these—in the apse of the Crystal Palace? The head of a Pantomime clown, some twelve feet broad, with a mouth opening from ear to ear, opening and shutting by machinery, its eyes squinting alternately, and collapsing by machinery, its humour in general provided for by machinery, with the recognised utterance of English Wisdom inscribed above—"Here we are again."[3] But the striking thing of all was that, though as I said the humour of the thing could not but have been perfect—being provided for by machinery—nobody laughed at it. Few even had consistency of comparative observation enough to find out that it moved. When they did, they touched their neighbour's elbow, looked up with a frightened expression for a minute, and passed on, with an appearance of discomfort, knowing that it was their duty to laugh, and failing signally when they tried. And in all the Palace, with its flowers, casts, pictures, shop-stands, and spinning-jennies, I saw, except among the children, not one amused face. There was a good deal of scuffling and noise sometimes, a rude burst of laughter, but no expression of pleasure, far less of attention or admiration.

26. It is not, however, my business to-night to consider how the average holiday-maker might be better amused;

[1] [See Vol. XII. p. 418 *n.*; and Vol. XVIII. p. 243 *n.*]

[2] [For the Christ at Pisa, see the letter cited in a note upon *Aratra Pentelici*, § 55. For the Madonna of Torcello, see *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. p. 184, and *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 21).]

[3] [Ruskin referred again to this inscription also in *Aratra Pentelici*, § 55.]

I only want to insist on the distinction between a place of amusement and an art school, and to state very positively that in the degree in which you try to unite them, you destroy the efficiency of both. If I go to the Crystal Palace to make a note on the cast of a statue, it is a considerable nuisance to me to have a party of children chasing each other round it; while to the children themselves, and to their parents much more, the presence of this brittle white spectre—which they ought to admire, and are only afraid of knocking over—is a damping and solemnizing feature of the Palace, fatally destructive of merriment. But I may just say in passing that so far as I have any clear notion of improving such places of recreation, I would, in the first place, make them thoroughly pretty buildings, pleasantly and gracefully decorated, and without any cracks in the floor, making one terrified to pull out a sixpence for fear of dropping it. Then I should give plenty of room for running about, plenty of flowers always carefully named, and with good popular and useful information about them given in a cheap alphabetical catalogue; I should have some elementary branches of natural history, such as anybody could cheaply follow up, thoroughly illustrated; I should have good prints and pictures, permanent always, and well catalogued and explained; and I should use the now exploded panorama and diorama[1] with an attention to truth and a splendour and care in the execution which should—for in this any general rule admits of exception—be very truly a school both in physical geography and in art.

Farther, I am prepared to use the theatre, and that largely, but a very different kind of theatre from any we frequent now; and of course the more good music you can get listened to the better, provided always that it be listened to as music, not as noise.

[1] [Ruskin is thinking of the Panorama in Leicester Square (on the site of the present Alhambra), and of the Diorama in Regent's Park—popular in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century.]

27. I pass next to the chief subject of our inquiry—the proper arrangement of public educational collections. Such institutions as they should be distinct from places of public amusement on the one hand, so they should be distinct from national museums on the other. I will read on this point a piece of a letter written to the *Times* last year:[1]—

"There is a confused notion in the existing public mind that the British Museum is partly a parish school, partly a circulating library, and partly a place for Christmas entertainments.

"It is none of the three, and I hope will never be made any of the three. But especially and most distinctly it is not a 'preparatory school,' nor even an 'academy for young gentlemen,' nor even a 'working men's college.' A national museum is one thing, a national place of education another; and the more sternly and unequivocally they are separated the better will each perform its office—the one of treasuring, and the other of teaching. I heartily wish that there were already, as one day there must be, large educational museums in every district of London freely open every day, and well lighted and warmed at night, with all furniture of comfort, and full aids for the use of their contents by all classes. But you might just as rationally send the British public to the Tower to study mineralogy upon the Crown jewels as make the unique pieces of a worthy national collection (such as, owing mainly to the exertions of its maligned officers, that of our British Museum has recently become) the means of elementary public instruction. After men have learnt their science or their art, at least so far as to know a common and a rare example in either, a national museum is useful, and ought to be easily accessible to them; but until then unique or selected specimens in natural history are without interest to them, and the best art is useless as a blank wall."

[1] [A letter from Ruskin himself in the *Times* of January 27, 1866. The rest of the letter is printed below, as an appendix to this lecture: see p. 229.]

28. This being so, there are three kinds of national collections which it is desirable should be arranged especially for educational purposes:—

1. Libraries.
2. Educational Museums of Natural History.
3. Educational Museums of Art.

First, of Libraries. The British Museum ought to contain no books except those of which copies are unique or rare. All others should be arranged in smaller public libraries for familiar use with excellent attached reading-rooms, and access to the Museum reading-room should be a matter of higher privilege.

One of the worst sources of [the corruption[1]] of the national temper and intellect is in the irrigation of it by foolish and evil writing overflowing. The Greek Parnassus was of living rock and its Helicon of living waters; but our Parnassus is like the Rossberg,[2] of rolled pebbles and worn fragments, and by the weight of it squeezing out streams of slime. And the thing needing to be done is the selection by our Universities of a series of virtuous, vigorous, helpful, and beautiful examples of literature, not many,[3] but clearly enough for any man's life, and the publication of them in a perfect form;[4] and the founding of a public library in every important town,[5] which should contain this series at least, and copies enough of these to supply all the readers, with reading-rooms attached, into which the entrance should be matter of some difficulty and honourable privilege, yet free on certain conditions to all.

29. Similarly, we require the selection by our Universities, and the purchase by Government, of a limited series of engravings and casts representing works of art of

[1] [The words "of corruption" are here conjecturally inserted; there is a blank in the MS.]

[2] [For other references to the fall of the Rossberg, see Vol. VI. pp. 195 *n.*, 379.]

[3] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1871, § 4 (Vol. XVIII. p. 33).]

[4] [A scheme which Ruskin designed to carry out in his *Bibliotheca Pastorum*: compare Vol. XVIII. p. 104 *n.*]

[5] [Compare Vol. XVIII. pp. xxi., 104.]

exclusive and high merits, such as in every respect might form and guide the mind of the student contemplating them; and these, so limited in numbers as to permit attention to be given to every one, and all to be well remembered as parts of a relatively collected whole, should form a small museum in connection with every such public library, and an explanatory catalogue be prepared for them stating whatever facts respecting each it was desirable for the student to know. Farther, every one of our principal cities ought to have a permanent gallery of art[1] of which the function should be wholly educational, as distinguished from the historical and general purposes of the collections in the British Museum and National Gallery. And this should be done under the clear understanding that the utility of an educational collection depends not on its extent, but, first, on the absolute exclusion of all works of secondary merit or of trivial character (so that the full strength of trusting and faithful admiration might be given to whatever was exhibited); and, secondly, on the easy visibility and pleasantly decorous presentation of the works of art contained in them, and on the general comfort and habitableness of the rooms.

80. (2.) Secondly, Educational Museums of Natural History. The Natural History Collection in the British Museum should be as complete as it can by any cost or research be made, but it should contain no inferior or duplicate specimens, and its arrangements should be calculated for scientific reference, not for exhibition. It should only be for the use of advanced students in every science. But the Educational collections of Natural History should be arranged so as to attract and reward inquiry; they should be disposed for exhibition with the utmost convenience and elegance, and elaborately catalogued, with references to the best farther description of each class of objects exhibited. Small libraries containing such books only, should

[1] [See the Introduction; above, p. xxi.]

be attached to the collections, with suites of reading-rooms; and while a certain part of the series of exhibited objects was permanent and not permitted to be handled, a sufficient number of inferior specimens replaceable from time to time should be kept in cabinets connected with the reading-rooms, and of these inferior specimens the curator should have the power of permitting quite free experimental use to such students as he might judge deserving of the trust.

31. (3.) Lastly, I come to Schools of Art. And here a quite new consideration introduces itself. In natural history your specimens can only be more or less instructive, they can never be the reverse of instructive. But specimens of art either lead or mislead; there is in these a positive good and a positive bad, and the first condition of your being able to establish a School of Art at all is that you should clearly know one from the other. There is this farther difference also, and a very essential one. While in natural history, if you exclude useless duplicates, you cannot for representation of varieties have too many specimens; in art, you can hardly have too few. The good a student gets from the examination of any work is most strictly proportioned to the strength of feeling and closeness of attention he gives to it, and the feeling will not come at first, nor perhaps for a long time. Your great object should be to fasten this, the student's attention, on the examples required for his help, and then not to distract it. He will get three times as much good from one piece looked at for half-an-hour, as from three looked at for ten minutes each. And, lastly, here is a third and no less vital distinction. In natural history, though good specimens of characteristic average quality are on the whole most useful, it is well occasionally to see the finest types of every species. But in art it is often injurious to see the highest kind until you are ready for them. Not indeed if, as in times of energetic art life, the highest be everywhere a common food: men then take of it, naturally, just as much or little as they like—that is to say, as much or little as they should; but

when it is presented to them rarely, and they try to compel themselves into liking it or learning from it—being all the while wholly incapable of entering into its true qualities —it falsifies their whole nature and is mere poison. I could give you some curious personal experiences on this matter, but I must keep to the business in hand.

Our object, then, in the Educational Art Schools should be to arrange a series of specimens, all first-rate of their kind, but for the most part of a description intelligible to the ordinary student—drawings before engravings, for instance, and engraving before painting, and bold dramatic sculpture before refined ideal sculpture—keeping all the highest works of art without any exception in the National Gallery, and only allowing them to be copied or studied from as matter of high privilege.

82. Now to bring these conditions into practice. The first is that you should have no bad art visible anywhere.

This is the great mischief in the Kensington Collection. It is full of precious and instructive things, but they are surrounded by the vilest, and the very aspect of these, even if not chosen for imitation, prevents the qualities of the good ones from being felt. Who is to judge of relative merit, you will ask. Well, the point is simply this: if you cannot find among the upper and educated classes of England a small body of men so far informed on the subject of art as to agree what are its mainly desirable and what its undesirable qualities, you can have no art schools. You can only have a confused museum of objects acquired by chance, out of which the student must learn what he can discover by chance.[1]

83. I do not think, however, that there would be any real difficulty in this. Once fix your principle, that no bad or even gravely deficient art is to be admitted into the educational collections, and you will easily by vote of committee be able to cleanse and purify them to a most

[1] [Compare Ruskin's description of the South Kensington Museum, as "a Cretan labyrinth," in his Letters of 1880 on "A Museum or Picture Gallery" (*On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. p. 627, reprinted in a later volume of this edition).]

wholesome and vivifying extent. And the thing I should like to see done is mainly this. Let a certain not extensive but carefully chosen series of casts from sculpture and coins, of photographs from architecture, drawings and natural objects, and of engravings of standard value, be fixed upon as the basis of the educational collection. Let this established series be carefully catalogued, described, and arranged in illustrative order, and let every town possessing an art school do what it can to obtain the nucleus of this appointed series of which each piece should be everywhere known by its unalterable number, so that in discussion and writing about art Number so-and-so of the school collection should be as recognised a piece as the numbered Sonata of a great composer.[1] Farther, as in the natural history collections inferior specimens, so in these art collections duplicate copies of the prints, casts, and photographs should be kept for close examination and free use: many private persons would gladly contribute from their stores for such purpose when once they knew what was wanted; while reflectively the importance attached to the authoritative examples chosen for the main school collection, would make private persons interested and eager in the possession of the same, and would act strictly as a teacher in every household.

34. Then for crown to this established series, whatever was obtainable of good painting, sculpture, and decorative art ought to be exhibited in a beautiful and attractive way; but only what was good and beautiful. I would insist much on this principle of severe selection—one good piece of art is a school in itself; surround it by a dozen of bad ones, and it becomes useless. There's a Turner drawing of the Yorkshire Series in the Kensington Collection—Hornby Castle.[2] Put that in a small room by itself, and draw the

[1] [So Ruskin preaches also in a footnote to one of his Oxford Catalogues (*Catalogue of Examples, 1870*, Educational Series, No. 23); but he did not practise the virtue—as the reader of the Bibliographical Notes to those Catalogues will perceive (Vol. XX.).]

[2] [No. 88 (included in the Sheepshanks Gift); for another reference to it, see Vol. XIII. p. 590.]

student's attention to it as a wholly precious thing, and it will teach all water-colour drawing from beginning to end; and in subject—all tree drawing, all mountain drawing, all principles of light, shade, and colour—you want nothing more than that one work. But it hangs now in a corner surrounded by a mass of rubbish, and I never saw a human creature look at it yet, unless I dragged them up to it, nor do I believe it possible for a student to enter the room at all but at risk of getting harm done to his eye and taste. I cannot forbear, with respect to the purification and vivifying of our school museums, here mentioning with entire thankfulness and congratulation—the first to the doers of the work, and the second to the students of Oxford—what has just been done in this kind by the Curators of the Taylor Buildings—the Dean of Christ Church, Professor Rawlinson, Dr. Acland. The collection there, though including some of the most important first-class drawings in Europe, was, until lately, rendered practically useless, because they were encumbered with inferior work and exhibited in an unsightly manner. All the bad drawings have now been removed into other parts of the Museum, and the precious ones have been in a sightly and graceful way arranged in three rooms —one devoted to Michael Angelo, one to Raphael, one to Turner—and I know that thus the drawings, of which at present the collection exists, will have most vital influence on education in the University; nor do I doubt that the unselfish possessors of valuable pictures, little seen in their private galleries, and who may be desirous of making them more publicly serviceable, will henceforward feel that they could not appoint for them any more honourable or more conspicuously useful position than they would occupy in the Gallery of Oxford.[1]

[1] [The University Galleries in the Taylor Building have been again somewhat rearranged since Ruskin wrote this lecture. His prediction of private benefactions has been partly fulfilled by the notable bequest of Pre-Raphaelite pictures formerly in the collection of Mr. T. Combe. A few months later than this lecture, Ruskin was sounded on his willingness to become a Curator of the Galleries: see above, Introduction, p. xxxiv.]

35. And now, lastly, we come to the National Gallery or Museum of Art—the Treasury and Storehouse, not the school; respecting which the great law should be that while everything was perfectly accessible to the persons who really needed sight and use of it, nothing should be exhibited to the public confusedly and vainly merely for the sake of showing it was there, but that all the most precious possessions should be exhibited with every beautiful accompaniment and accessory that could either do them honour or prepare the temper of the spectator for their meaning. Your National Gallery must be a stately place—a true Palace of Art, pure in the style of it indeed, and, as far as thought can reach, removed from grossness or excess of ornament, but not unsumptuous, especially precious in material and exquisite in workmanship, and having the places of all its chief possessions unalterably decided upon, so that they can be at once treated with right harmony of effect. Classification, in a National Gallery, should be boldly kept subordinate to the convenience of finding a thing where you expect it to be, and in a place which becomes it. I don't care what the connection of things is, so only that they be not kept for years in dark corridors or plank outhouses. Build beautiful rooms for what you have got, let the things take up their abode therein, and when you get anything else like them, build another room for that, and don't disturb what you have already.

36. Therefore, while a National Gallery should always be stately and lovely, it should not be limited by symmetries of plan.[1] It should look, in a word, what it is—a gallery, capable of being extended without limit in any convenient direction; and as in any great metropolis it may be assumed that ground is valuable, a National Gallery may always advisably consist of three stories—the lowest for sculpture, the second for the libraries and prints, the third, lighted from above, and, where needful, laterally also, for the paintings,

[1] [Compare Ruskin's own scheme for a "labyrinthine" Turner Gallery: Vol. XIII. p. xxviii.]

vases, gems, and coins. And these three stories might, in the external design, bear to each other somewhat the relations of the nave arches, triforium, and cloister of a cathedral; or, if the design were Italian, might be beautifully proportioned in any convenient dimensions. Design the walls or arches of such an elevation gracefully for two compartments, and you may prolong the same design for miles, if you need it, and find it more beautiful and impressive as it is extended. I should myself desire to see it built or inlaid with some beautifully coloured and fine stone—Cornish or Genoa serpentine, or any kind of grey or green marble, with string-courses of white marble and bearing shafts of porphyry—or else carved niches of white marble, containing statues; but it is of no use saying what would be desirable—for I know that it will never be done—nor saying where it should be built neither, for there it assuredly never will be built.

87. It may easily be seen where it should be built. The reach of the river from Westminster to Vauxhall is a disgrace to the metropolis; it might be, and should be, its chief beauty. Subscribe only once for all as much money as you spend annually in gunpowder and cannon cast only to burst. Think what an absurd thing it is that you cannot do this. Think what you would say of the wits of a private gentleman who could not once for all spend as much in building his picture gallery as he spent every year in experimenting on the fastenings of his shutters.[1] That's the real state of our national wits. Take the cost of a year's fireworks—take fifteen millions boldly out of your pocket, knock down the penitentiary at Pimlico,[2] and send your beloved criminals to be penitent out of sight somewhere, clear away the gasometers on that side, and the bone-boilers on the other, lay out a line of gardens

[1] [Compare Vol. XVIII. p. 438.]

[2] [Thirty years after Ruskin wrote this was done; and the "National Gallery of British Art," built by Sir Henry Tate, now stands on the site of the Millbank Penitentiary at Pimlico.]

from Lambeth Palace to Vauxhall Bridge on the south side of the river, and on this, build a National Gallery of Porphyry and white marble, reaching that mile long from Westminster to Vauxhall Bridge, and I only wish it may be pretty enough and rich enough for the French to want to come and steal it.

38. Of course this will not be done, nor can anything be proposed that ought to be done, but with an air of mockery. For indeed—and this was one of the principal things I went down to say at Cambridge — the limits of all technical education and, secondly, the mode and limits of this general art instruction must be physically determined by the conditions of national life of which we may anticipate the general and final adoption.[1]

It will be soon now perceived that the competition of nations with each other's trade, and their admiring emulation of each other's skill, is no logical, nor in the end admissible, consequence of our enlarged ideas respecting freedom of commerce. It will be found that the division of labour among different races is just as wise and necessary as the division of it among individuals, and that a time comes in the life of a people, as in that of a youth, when it is imperatively necessary for it to choose its profession. And if the final determination of the English people[2] be that it will live by mixed trading and by digging of iron,[3] no one need ask any farther questions respecting its art-education. Even supposing that it could be raised into unanimity of such heroic resolution as that instead of digging iron for the rest of the world, some inferior race in that world should dig iron for it, and that for its own part as a people it would live, whether a small or great multitude, in pure air, on clean earth, and by labour of

[1] [See the preceding lecture.]

[2] [For similar passages on the Future of England, see Vol. VII. p. 425; Vol. XVII. p. 326; and Vol. XVIII. p. 134.]

[3] [Here Ruskin first wrote ". . . that it will consist mainly of a company of pedlars and ironmongers purchasing occasional emancipation into the higher character of sportsmen or gamesters, no one need . . ."]

its intellect, no less than of its hands; supposing this possible—which at present it is not—the political and physical questions needing painful decision in the struggle for immediate life would for a long period render this business of its art instruction a quite inferior and inconsiderable one.[1]

A LETTER ON THE BRITISH MUSEUM[2]

[The following is the letter to the Editor of the *Times* referred to above, § 27, p. 219:—]

SIR,—As I see in your impression of yesterday that my name was introduced in support of some remarks made, at the meeting of the Society of Arts, on the management of the British Museum,[3] and as the tendency of the remarks I refer to was depreciatory of the efforts and aims of several officers of the Museum—more especially of the work done on the collection of minerals by my friend Mr. Nevil S. Maskelyne[4]—you will, I hope, permit me, not having been present at the meeting, to express my feeling on the subject briefly in your columns.

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[1] [The MS. continues:—

"There are indeed some measures instantly in our power and in all cases desirable, and of which the effect could not but be in the meanwhile for good. These I will briefly name, consisting mainly all of"—

and there the MS. breaks off. The last page of it is headed "Cambridge," showing that this was a passage in some earlier draft of the Rede lecture (see above, p. 188 *n.*). It will be observed that the present lecture thus comes to an end without the customary peroration. It appears, however, from the report of the lecture in the *Daily Telegraph* that "the speaker concluded by a few general suggestions as to what features are desirable in a National Gallery, most of which he did not read, but left for publication in the *Proceedings* of the Institution." No report of the lecture ultimately appeared in the *Proceedings*, and Ruskin never revised the lecture for publication.]

[2] [From the *Times*, January 27, 1866. Reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. pp. 78–81.]

[3] [At the meeting of the Society, in the Hall, Adelphi, Lord Henry Lennox read a paper on "The Uses of National Museums to Local Institutions," in which he spoke of Ruskin's suggestions "adopted and recommended to Parliament in annual reports, and in obedience to distinct Commissions," as having been unwarrantably disregarded since 1858. See Ruskin's official report on the Turner Bequest, printed in Vol. XIII. p. 319.]

[4] [Professor Nevil Story-Maskelyne (afterwards M.P. for the Cricklade Division) was then Keeper of Mineralogy at the Museum. The Natural History collections had not yet been removed to the separate Museum at South Kensington. He was also Professor of Mineralogy at Oxford: see *Eagle's Nest*, § 160.]

There is a confused notion in the existing public mind that the British Museum is partly a parish school . . .[1]

For all those who can use the existing national collection to any purpose, the Catalogue[2] as it now stands is amply sufficient: it would be difficult to conceive a more serviceable one. But the rapidly progressive state of (especially mineralogical) science, renders it impossible for the Curators to make their arrangements in all points satisfactory, or for long periods permanent. It is just because Mr. Maskelyne is doing more active, continual, and careful work than, as far as I know, is at present done in any national museum in Europe—because he is completing gaps in the present series by the intercalation of carefully sought specimens, and accurately reforming its classification by recently corrected analyses—that the collection cannot yet fall into the formal and placid order in which an indolent Curator would speedily arrange and willingly leave it.

I am glad that Lord H. Lennox referred to the passage in my report on the Turner Collection in which I recommended that certain portions of that great series should be distributed, for permanence, among our leading provincial towns.[3] But I had rather see the whole Turner collection buried, not merely in the cellars of the National Gallery, but with Prospero's staff fathoms in the earth,[4] than that it should be the means of inaugurating the fatal custom of carrying great works of art about the roads for a show. If you *must* make them educational to the public, hang Titian's Bacchus up for a vintner's sign, and give Henry VI.'s Psalter[5] for a spelling-book to the Bluecoat School; but, at least, hang the one from a permanent post, and chain the other to the boys' desks, and do not send them about in caravans to every annual Bartholomew Fair.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, *Jan.* 26.

[1] [As above, p. 219.]

[2] [Mr. Nevil Story-Maskelyne's description of the minerals occupied pp. 39–51 of the *Guide to the Exhibition Rooms of the Departments of Natural History and Antiquities*, 1866.]

[3] [See Vol. XIII. p. 324; and compare the similar recommendation with regard to the "Outlines of John Leech," in the letter on that subject (Vol. XIV. p. 332).]

[4] [*Tempest*, Act v. sc. 1, 55.]

[5] [For Ruskin's many other references to Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne" (No. 35 in the National Gallery), see General Index. Henry VI.'s Psalter is in the British Museum ("Domitian A. 17," in the Cottonian Catalogue). It is of early fifteenth-century work, and was executed in England by a French artist for the then youthful king, from whom it takes its name. For another reference to it, see *Lectures on Landscape*, § 77.]

VI

"FAIRY STORIES"

A PREFACE TO "GERMAN POPULAR STORIES"

(1868)

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This essay was first printed in a work with the following title:—

> German | Popular | Stories. | With Illustrations | after the original designs of George Cruikshank. | Edited by Edgar Taylor. | A New Edition, | With Introduction by John Ruskin, M.A. | London: | John Camden Hotten, Piccadilly. | 1869.

Octavo, pp. xxviii.+335. Issued in cloth boards, price 6s. 6d. Also some large-paper copies, with the plates printed in brown ink, at 21s.; and a few with India proofs, at 3s. 6d.

The volume was a reprint of two series of "German Popular Stories" (translated from the brothers Grimm), issued, with Cruikshank's illustrations, in 1823 and 1826. The reprint, with Ruskin's Introduction, has been frequently re-issued. The publisher in an "Advertisement" said: "I had at first thought of reproducing it in two volumes the same size as the originals; but it was Mr. Ruskin's wish that the new edition should appeal to young readers rather than to adults, and the present convenient form was decided upon." Ruskin's Introduction occupies pp. v.–xiv.

The Introduction was reprinted in 1885 in *On the Old Road*, under the heading "Fairy Stories," vol. ii. pp. 167–176 (§§ 124–130), and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. iii. pp. 170–179 (§§ 124–130). The paragraphs are here re-numbered. The spaces between sentences or paragraphs follow the original setting.]

FAIRY STORIES

[1868]

1. LONG since, longer ago perhaps than the opening of some fairy tales, I was asked by the publisher[1] who has been rash enough, at my request, to reprint these my favourite old stories[2] in their earliest English form, to set down for him my reasons for preferring them to the more polished legends, moral and satiric, which are now, with rich adornment of every page by very admirable art, presented to the acceptance of the Nursery.

But it seemed to me to matter so little to the majestic independence of the child-public, who, beside themselves, liked, or who disliked, what they pronounced entertaining, that it is only on strict claims of a promise unwarily given that I venture on the impertinence of eulogy; and my reluctance is the greater, because there is in fact nothing very notable in these tales, unless it be their freedom from faults which for some time have been held to be quite the reverse of faults, by the majority of readers.

2. In the best stories recently written for the young, there is a taint which it is not easy to define, but which inevitably follows on the author's addressing himself to children bred in school-rooms and drawing-rooms, instead of fields and woods—children whose favourite amusements are premature imitations of the vanities of elder people, and whose conceptions of beauty are dependent partly on

[1] [Mr. J. C. Hotten: see Bibliographical Note.]
[2] [For Ruskin's early reading of Grimm and his copying of Cruikshank's illustrations (first published in 1823 and 1826), see *Præterita*, i. § 82.]

costliness of dress. The fairies who interfere in the fortunes of these little ones are apt to be resplendent chiefly in millinery and satin slippers, and appalling more by their airs than their enchantments.

The fine satire which, gleaming through every playful word, renders some of these recent stories as attractive to the old as to the young, seems to me no less to unfit them for their proper function. Children should laugh, but not mock; and when they laugh, it should not be at the weaknesses or faults of others. They should be taught, as far as they are permitted to concern themselves with the characters of those around them, to seek faithfully for good, not to lie in wait maliciously to make themselves merry with evil: they should be too painfully sensitive to wrong, to smile at it; and too modest to constitute themselves its judges.

8. With these minor errors a far graver one is involved. As the simplicity of the sense of beauty has been lost in recent tales for children, so also the simplicity of their conception of love. That word which, in the heart of a child, should represent the most constant and vital part of its being; which ought to be the sign of the most solemn thoughts that inform its awakening soul and, in one wide mystery of pure sunrise, should flood the zenith of its heaven, and gleam on the dew at its feet; this word, which should be consecrated on its lips, together with the Name which it may not take in vain, and whose meaning should soften and animate every emotion through which the inferior things and the feeble creatures, set beneath it in its narrow world, are revealed to its curiosity or companionship;—this word, in modern child-story, is too often restrained and darkened into the hieroglyph of an evil mystery, troubling the sweet peace of youth with premature gleams of uncomprehended passion, and flitting shadows of unrecognized sin.

4. These grave faults in the spirit of recent child-fiction are connected with a parallel folly of purpose. Parents who are too indolent and self-indulgent to form their children's characters by wholesome discipline, or in their own habits and principles of life are conscious of setting before them no faultless example, vainly endeavour to substitute the persuasive influence of moral precept, intruded in the guise of amusement, for the strength of moral habit compelled by righteous authority:—vainly think to inform the heart of infancy with deliberative wisdom, while they abdicate the guardianship of its unquestioning innocence; and warp into the agonies of an immature philosophy of conscience the once fearless strength of its unsullied and unhesitating virtue.

A child should not need to choose between right and wrong. It should not be capable of wrong; it should not conceive of wrong. Obedient, as bark to helm, not by sudden strain or effort, but in the freedom of its bright course of constant life; true, with an undistinguished, painless, unboastful truth, in a crystalline household world of truth; gentle, through daily entreatings of gentleness, and honourable trusts, and pretty prides of child-fellowship in offices of good; strong, not in bitter and doubtful contest with temptation, but in peace of heart, and armour of habitual right, from which temptation falls like thawing hail; self-commanding, not in sick restraint of mean appetites and covetous thoughts, but in vital joy of unluxurious life, and contentment in narrow possession, wisely esteemed.

Children so trained have no need of moral fairy tales; but they will find in the apparently vain and fitful courses of any tradition of old time, honestly delivered to them, a teaching for which no other can be substituted, and of which the power cannot be measured; animating for them the material world with inextinguishable life, fortifying them

against the glacial cold of selfish science, and preparing them submissively, and with no bitterness of astonishment, to behold, in later years, the mystery—divinely appointed to remain such to all human thought—of the fates that happen alike to the evil and the good.

5. And the effect of the endeavour to make stories moral upon the literary merit of the work itself, is as harmful as the motive of the effort is false. For every fairy tale worth recording at all is the remnant of a tradition possessing true historical value;[1]—historical, at least, in so far as it has naturally arisen out of the mind of a people under special circumstances, and risen not without meaning, nor removed altogether from their sphere of religious faith. It sustains afterwards natural changes from the sincere action of the fear or fancy of successive generations; it takes new colour from their manner of life, and new form from their changing moral tempers. As long as these changes are natural and effortless, accidental and inevitable, the story remains essentially true, altering its form, indeed, like a flying cloud, but remaining a sign of the sky; a shadowy image, as truly a part of the great firmament of the human mind as the light of reason which it seems to interrupt. But the fair deceit and innocent error of it cannot be interpreted nor restrained by a wilful purpose, and all additions to it by art do but defile, as the shepherd disturbs the flakes of morning mist with smoke from his fire of dead leaves.

6. There is also a deeper collateral mischief in this indulgence of licentious change and retouching of stories to suit particular tastes, or inculcate favourite doctrines. It directly destroys the child's power of rendering any such belief as it would otherwise have been in his nature to give to an imaginative vision. How far it is expedient to

[1] [Compare the opening pages of the *Queen of the Air*.]

occupy his mind with ideal forms at all may be questionable to many, though not to me; but it is quite beyond question that if we do allow of the fictitious representation, that representation should be calm and complete, possessed to the full, and read down its utmost depth. The little reader's attention should never be confused or disturbed, whether he is possessing himself of fairy tale or history. Let him know his fairy tale accurately, and have perfect joy or awe in the conception of it as if it were real; thus he will always be exercising his power of grasping realities: but a confused, careless, and discrediting tenure of the fiction will lead to as confused and careless reading of fact. Let the circumstances of both be strictly perceived, and long dwelt upon, and let the child's own mind develop fruit of thought from both. It is of the greatest importance early to secure this habit of contemplation, and therefore it is a grave error, either to multiply unnecessarily, or to illustrate with extravagant richness, the incidents presented to the imagination. It should multiply and illustrate them for itself; and, if the intellect is of any real value, there will be a mystery and wonderfulness in its own dreams which would only be thwarted by external illustration. Yet I do not bring forward the text or the etchings in this volume as examples of what either ought to be in works of the kind: they are in many respects common, imperfect, vulgar; but their vulgarity is of a wholesome and harmless kind. It is not, for instance, graceful English, to say that a thought "popped into Catherine's head"; but it nevertheless is far better, as an initiation into literary style, that a child should be told this than that "a subject attracted Catherine's attention." And in genuine forms of minor tradition, a rude and more or less illiterate tone will always be discernible; for all the best fairy tales have owed their birth, and the greater part of their power, to narrowness of social circumstances; they belong properly to districts in which walled cities are surrounded by bright and unblemished country, and in which a healthy and

bustling town life, not highly refined, is relieved by, and contrasted with, the calm enchantment of pastoral and woodland scenery, either under humble cultivation by peasant masters, or left in its natural solitude. Under conditions of this kind the imagination is enough excited to invent instinctively, (and rejoice in the invention of) spiritual forms of wildness and beauty, while yet it is restrained and made cheerful by the familiar accidents and relations of town life, mingling always in its fancy humorous and vulgar circumstances with pathetic ones, and never so much impressed with its supernatural phantasies as to be in danger of retaining them as any part of its religious faith. The good spirit descends gradually from an angel into a fairy, and the demon shrinks into a playful grotesque of diminutive malevolence, while yet both keep an accredited and vital influence upon the character and mind. But the language in which such ideas will be usually clothed must necessarily partake of their narrowness; and art is systematically incognizant of them, having only strength under the conditions which awake them to express itself in an irregular and gross grotesque, fit only for external architectural decoration.

7. The illustrations of this volume are almost the only exceptions I know to the general rule. They are of quite sterling and admirable art, in a class precisely parallel in elevation to the character of the tales which they illustrate; and the original etchings, as I have before said in the Appendix to my *Elements of Drawing*,[1] were unrivalled in masterfulness of touch since Rembrandt; (in some qualities of delineation unrivalled even by him). These copies have been so carefully executed that at first I was deceived by them, and supposed them to be late impressions from the plates (and what is more, I believe the master himself was deceived by them, and supposed them

[1] [Vol. XV. p. 222.]

to be his own); and although, on careful comparison with the first proofs, they will be found no exception to the terrible law that literal repetition of entirely fine work shall be, even to the hand that produced it,—much more to any other,—for ever impossible, they still represent, with sufficient fidelity to be in the highest degree instructive, the harmonious light and shade, the manly simplicity of execution, and the easy, unencumbered fancy, of designs which belonged to the best period of Cruikshank's genius.[1] To make somewhat enlarged copies of them, looking at them through a magnifying-glass, and never putting two lines where Cruikshank has put only one, would be an exercise in decision and severe drawing which would leave afterwards little to be learnt in schools. I would gladly also say much in their praise as imaginative designs; but the power of genuine imaginative work, and its difference from that which is compounded and patched together from borrowed sources, is of all qualities of art the most difficult to explain; and I must be content with the simple assertion of it.

And so I trust the good old book, and the honest work that adorns it, to such favour as they may find with children of open hearts and lowly lives.

DENMARK HILL, *Easter*, 1868.

[1] [For Ruskin's regret at the later direction of the artist's powers, see above, p. 77.]

VII

THE FLAMBOYANT ARCHITECTURE OF THE VALLEY OF THE SOMME

(1869)

[*Bibliographical Note.*—The lecture on "The Flamboyant Architecture of the Valley of the Somme" has not hitherto been published (see above, Introduction, p. xxi.). A few extracts from a MS. report of it (§ 1, and a passage in § 24) were, however, given in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of August 10, 1886; in an article entitled "On the Way to Switzerland."

The Catalogue, here appended to the lecture (pp. 269–277), has appeared in two editions:[1]—

First Edition (1869).—An octavo pamphlet of 12 pages (issued sewn and without wrappers), with the following title on p. 1:—

> *References to the Series of Paintings and* | *Sketches, from Mr. Ruskin's Collection,* | *Shown in Illustration of the Relations of* | *Flamboyant Architecture to Contemporary* | *and Subsequent Art,* | at the | Evening Meeting of the Royal Institution, | Friday, January 29th, 1869. | London: Queen Street Printing Office. | 1869.

Page 2 is blank; pp. 3–11 contain the notes; p. 12 is blank. In this edition Nos. 34 and 35 were omitted.

Second Edition (1869).—In this edition the title on p. 1 was different. The words "at the Evening . . . 1869" were omitted, and the words "References . . . Subsequent Art" were placed lower on the page. Pages 3–8 were the same. On p. 9 Nos. 34 and 35 were added, and this caused pp. 9–11 to be overrun. Otherwise the two editions are identical. In this edition, in No. 9, "Can" before "Mastino" has been omitted.]

[1] Only ed. 2 is noted in the *Bibliography* by Wise and Smart.

THE FLAMBOYANT ARCHITECTURE

OF THE

VALLEY OF THE SOMME

(*A Lecture at the Royal Institution, January* 29, 1869)

1. You stopped at the brow of the hill to put the drag on, and looked up to see where you were:—and there lay beneath you, far as eye could reach on either side, this wonderful valley of the Somme,—with line on line of tufted aspen and tall poplar, making the blue distances more exquisite in bloom by the gleam of their leaves; and in the midst of it, by the glittering of the divided streams of its river, lay the clustered mossy roofs of Abbeville,[1] like a purple flake of cloud, with the precipitous mass of the Cathedral towers rising mountainous through them, and here and there, in the midst of them, spaces of garden close set with pure green trees, bossy and perfect. So you trotted down the hill between bright chalk banks, with a cottage or two nestled into their recesses, and little round children rolling about like apples before the doors, and at the bottom you came into a space of open park ground, divided by stately avenues of chestnut and acacia,—with long banks of outwork and massive walls of bastion seen beyond—then came the hollow thunder of the drawbridge and shadow of the gate—and in an instant, you were in the gay street of a populous yet peaceful city—a fellowship of ancient houses set beside each other, with all the active companionship of business and sociableness of old friends,

[1] [For other descriptions of Abbeville, see *Poems*, describing a visit in 1835 (Vol. II. p. 398); and *Præterita*, i. ch. ix. §§ 177 *seq.*]

and yet each with the staid and self-possessed look of country houses surrounded by hereditary fields—or country cottages nested in forgotten glens,—each with its own character and fearlessly independent ways—its own steep gable, narrow or wide—its special little peaked windows set this way and that as the fancy took them,—its most particular odd corners, and outs and ins of wall to make the most of the ground and sunshine,—its own turret staircase, in the inner angle of the courtyard,—its own designs and fancies in carving of bracket and beam—its own only bridge over the clear branchlet of the Somme that rippled at its garden gate.[1]

2. All that's gone,—and most of Abbeville is like most

[1] [Among the MSS. of this lecture are some passages which show that Ruskin at first intended to take his hearers more leisurely to Abbeville. He begins at the ford of *Blanche Tache* over the estuary of the Somme (where Edward III. crossed the river on his way to Crécy, and near St. Valery-sur-Somme, whence William the Conqueror set sail), and tells a legend connected with Hugh Capet, whose right to the throne

> ". . . was most impressively manifested according to all tradition in the recovery of the body of St. Valery from its place of concealment at Montreuil. Hugo in person conducted the army which compelled its restitution from the Flemings, and either he himself or, [according] to other reports, the Count Bernard as his representative bearing the urn containing the relics, marched at the head of an immense multitude singing hymns from Montreuil to the ford of Somme. And as they reached the edge of the water—so ran for ages afterwards the popular tale—behold instantly the tide of the sea rose so high that it overflowed every channel and forbade the passage of the ford. Whereupon the Count Bernard making all the people kneel on the shore and praying for help, the water divided in the midst, and left free a wide path from one to the other shore, which all the people having traversed in great joy and wonder, the sea returned again to its place.
>
> "Well, from Blanche Tache the train will carry you for ten minutes through a piece of flat country entirely uninteresting, unless you care to look on your right for the aspen poplars which border the canals of the Somme between Abbeville and the sea. I suppose in Holland there may be something to match that canal and its avenue, but I have never seen their like yet; two perfectly healthy and unbroken ranks of lovely trees, on each side of a flowing stream, broad and straight as an arrow for five miles. Fancy the aisle of a cathedral five miles long, with a river for the pavement of it. It goes away into a point of blue light, like a little firefly. Of course you can't see anything of it from the railroad except here and there a few of its taller trees with their sides to you, but it would be worth while stopping at the next station to see [them], if there were nothing else to see. Something else there is, however; when you feel the train begin to go more slowly, look out forward on the left hand and you will see two massy square towers—which are still, and may be for a few months more—dark with the grand grey of age."]

The Market Place, Abbeville
(1868)

[illegible]

of London—rows of houses, all alike, with an heap of brickbats at the end of it. But St. Vulfran is still left, and it and the other churches have this special interest—they are the last of their race. The last—that is a bold word, and one which I would not press too far in the implied absoluteness of its negation. I don't mean that you may not by close search find here and there a fragment of good Gothic later than St. Vulfran of Abbeville, but I do mean that there is no other important building, nor even an unimportant one of beauty, belonging to the true Gothic school, and of later date than this. Roughly, it belongs to the last quarter of the fifteenth century,—1475 to 1500—and the Gothic of Flanders was hopelessly corrupt fifty years before that, the Gothic of Italy had given way to classicalism a hundred years before, and the Gothic spirit of England, though not yet dead, was fastened down and helpless under stern geometrical construction,[1] and frigid law of vertical line, so that it is walled up like a condemned nun, and you cannot see it die. But here, in France, it passes away in your sight; driven from all other scenes of its ancient power, it came to this narrow valley of the Somme, and passed away.

3. I have no doubt that if any architects are present, they are shocked at my calling this pure. Not ten buildings in the world, pure: Verona tombs grand, but not pure; Giotto's Gothic, not pure; our Early English is thin and cut to pieces in its mouldings. Gothic is developed, in one form young, and in another old. This is not central Gothic, but it is still *altogether* Gothic,—florid, but still essential, coherent. While, as I said, the Flemish is corrupt, and the English both corrupt and dead, here [it is] living and in all essential character incorrupt, while the Spire of Antwerp is only a Renaissance building in the shape of a Gothic one.

4. Now are you not inclined to ask, in the presence of

[1] [For Ruskin's dislike of English Perpendicular, see Vol. VIII. p. 108; and Vol. IX. p. 227.]

this last fragment of a series of beautiful human work that had lasted through five hundred years,—how it came to pass that in this [place] it perished?—what was the meaning of its fate?—by what power it had risen?—by what fault it fell?

Now, observe:—this is a most strangely complex question. Gothic architecture perished before two great influences,—the Reformation, and the revival of literature. We usually think of those influences as allied,—but they were not allied at all.

5. The Reformation was an illiterate movement—it was the rising of ignorant persons, who had been deceived, against the arts that had deceived them; its immediate tendency was to destroy Gothic as an art, with all the fine arts. But revived literature rose against it as not fine enough art. It destroyed Gothic, because it thought it had found something better than Gothic. These two adversaries were directly opposed,—they attacked from opposite flanks, and were as hostile to each other as to what they destroyed. Now,—you see—here is one most interesting question. Suppose these enemies had not attacked together. Suppose Luther had attacked it alone, on one flank, and Raphael alone, on the other. Suppose you had had reformation over Europe,—confiscation of priests' revenues in Rome as well as in England,—an Elizabeth on the throne of Madrid and a Cromwell at the gates of the Vatican. What form would the arts then have taken, as the Gothic expired? Or on the other hand,—suppose you had had Classic literature revived without religious reformation, and that a still imperious and fervid Catholicism had built its temples to the Madonna,—its shrines to the Saints,—at Whitby and Tynemouth—at Bolton and Melrose—on the dust of their despised aisles,—in the form of the temples of the Lacinian Juno[1] and the Ephesian Diana,—

[1] [The Lacinian promontory had a celebrated temple of Juno (see *Æneid*, iii. 552), some remains of which are still standing and give the spot its modern name, Capo della Colonne.]

St. Vulfran, Abbeville; from the East

what would have been the course of art, and human thought then? You see how interesting this double question would be,—and how carefully we must distinguish the effect of a popular emotion which broke down images because it hated images, from one which removed them only to make them fairer and more like heathen gods. And again,—how careful to distinguish a movement which destroyed legendary art because it detested legend, from a movement which no longer needed legendary art because its legends could now be in books instead of pictures.

6. But both these questions, interesting as they are, are subordinate to a greater one. Suppose either, or both, of those adversaries had risen against Gothic two centuries earlier, and that printing had been discovered, and classic literature revived, in the reign of Saint Louis. Quite easily that might have chanced. There was nothing to hinder it in the nature of things,—and in that case, the two adversaries would have attacked the Gothic in youth, and met the main rush of its power. What would have happened then? Well, I can tell you what would have happened. That would have taken place universally, which did take place partially in the leading minds of the thirteenth century. The strong Gothic would have received the classical element everywhere, as it did at Florence. That architecture of Florence did receive classical forms, as the mind of Dante received classical legends, incorporating them with its own life, and making that life more varied and more vivid. But in the sixteenth century the Gothic itself was dying[1]—the stock of the tree was rotten to its root, no grafting was any more possible on any branch of it. It sank at the first touch of the axe; and a new thing was planted instead of it, foreign to the soil, and which will never flourish there. Therefore, what I have to show you to-night is the form of this Christian architecture in its last time—not yet dead—but with its hours numbered, and

[1] [Compare *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. p. 98.]

numbered not by an enemy's will, but by its own weakness,—not by external calamity, but by native corruption.

7. And, first, I have just used the expression—by what faults it fell.

. . . . . .[1]

8. Now I know you partly recognize the truth of this as I speak it. But you may do away with all doubt, by putting the question home to yourselves, before any work of art—nay, before even the feeblest copy or shadow of a work—of any Central Greek or Italian School. This evening, I have put in the next room two pictures,[2] one by Titian, the other a study from Luini, which, however feeble, being patiently wrought on the spot, as far as possible in facsimile, conveys to you a better impression than an ordinary engraving could, of a work in itself so beautiful that I do not fear but that you will find some reflex of its true character, even in this its shadow. Stand for a few moments to-night before those pictures, and ask of yourselves whether men and women such as they represent were trained in a vicious or degraded element, and whether the painters who could understand them and rejoice in making their nobleness eternal, saw them with eyes warped by evil, or painted them with hands enfeebled by guilt. The Venetian picture should be especially interesting to us English, for it is the portrait of a Merchant King. Sismondi[3] says of him: "Gritti, one of the merchants whom the Turks had arrested at Constantinople in the beginning of their quarrel with Venice, conducted from his prison the negotiations in the name of his country; fortune having destined this man, no less distinguished for the beauty of

[1] [The passage, which here followed in the lecture, was detached by Ruskin for use in *The Queen of the Air*, §§ 102–105: see below, pp. 389–392, where he says the passage "will be better read than in its incidental connection with the porches of Abbeville." It shows that "the faults of a work are the faults of its workmen," great art being "the expression in form of the mind of a great man."]

[2] [Nos. 1 and 2 in the Catalogue following the lecture (below, p. 269). The Titian is Plate X. here; for the Luini, see the Frontispiece and Introduction, pp. lxxii.-lxxiv.]

[3] [*Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Âge*, ed. 1826, vol. xiii. p. 239. Gritti was Doge, 1523–1538.]

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The Doge Andrea Gritti

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his face, and the strength of his person, than for his military and political genius, to conclude from the midst of his captivity two of the most important treaties ever signed by the state; and afterwards signalizing himself in the war of the league of Cambrai, and reconciling his country to France, he mounted the Ducal throne and held it through fifteen years;"—reigned,—the historian ought to have added —in brightness of honour, and strengthened by the affection and the trust of every heart in Venice.

9. There are three more pictures in the other room which will mark for you in a distinct manner the connection of national character with modes of work. The Meissonier[1] especially deserves your attention, as one of the most laboured pieces that have yet come from his hand,—and its execution is as surely indicative of the accomplished, subtle, and worldly force of the French Schools, as the country boys of Hunt[2] testify to the simple and cheerful energy of a rustic English mind. In all first-rate work character is thus legible at a glance, but in the plurality of instances, and of schools, a thousand varied modes of failure or merit mark the mingling of broken moral powers. So that it is no more possible to pronounce in a word the praise or blame of an art than of a nation. Mixed of evil and good,—nor even these themselves always as such definable, but the evil atoned for, till it seems worthy of love, and the good thoughtless or thwarted till it is all in vain —the inventions, like the arts of men, shine but with an interrupted lustre, and, like the fair colours of birds' plumage, changing as we change our place, in one light glow and in another fade.

10. The common sense of it all is, that no man is perfect: commonly the best kind of man is liable to bad flaws and failures,—all the more notable for the rest of the good in him. Especially the men of a delicate make;—

[1] [No. 3 in the Catalogue (p. 269).]

[2] [No. 4, p. 269. The last of the "three other pictures" mentioned in the text was the "Cottage Interior" by Frère: No. 5, p. 270.]

Raphael, Vandyke, Mozart, and all the men of their order. Then the people who think character has nothing to do with art, say: "Look, here's a great painter, and he did so and so." Well—whatever he did of wrong shortened his powers, and whatever he resisted of wrong strengthened them. All the good in him came of the good at the root, and all the bad, of the bad at the root. Ask of a man always whether there's any good in him, and take what you find fearlessly, knowing that the grape never came of the thorn, nor the fig of the thistle. By their fruits ye shall know them.[1]

11. Therefore in reading this architecture, you will read infallibly the faults of its builders. And yet you must observe carefully that the higher arts, which involve the action of the whole intellect, tell the story of the entire national character; but the constructive and mechanical arts tell only part. From a nation's painting, you know everything concerning it; from a nation's architecture, only half. That portrait of Andrea Gritti by Titian tells you everything essential to be known about the power of Venice in his day—the breed of her race, their self-command, their subtlety, their courage, their refinement of sensitive faculty, and their noble methods of work. So,—if you go to the Kensington Museum,—everything that needs to be known, nay, the deepest things that can ever be known, of England a hundred years ago, are written in two pictures of Reynolds': the Age of Innocence, and the young Colonel mounting his horse.[2] Carlyle and Froude and Macaulay all together cannot tell you as much as those two bits of canvas will when you have once learned to read them.

12. So we proceed to read this bit of work[3] as well

[1] [Matthew vii. 16. On the subject of art and character, see above, p. 165.]

[2] [Both now in the National Gallery. For other references to the "Age of Innocence" (No. 307), see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 125, and *Art of England*, § 66. The "young Colonel mounting his horse" is the "Portrait of Captain Orme" (No. 681).]

[3] [*i.e.*, St. Vulfran at Abbeville, of which there were drawings shown in the lecture room: see Catalogue, pp. 276, 277.]

as we can. Well—first there are its more physical and material qualities. What is it made of—built of? That's the first thing to ask of all building. Egyptian building is essentially of porphyry,—Greek of marble,—St. Mark's at Venice of glass and alabaster,—and this is—built of chalk, common chalk—chalk with the flints in it left in, and sticking out here and there. Well, that's the first point to think about. All flamboyant architecture is essentially chalk architecture,—it is built of some light, soft, greasy stone, which you can cut like cheese, which you can drive a furrow into with your chisel an inch deep, as a ploughman furrows his field. Well, of course, with this sort of stuff the workman goes instinctively in for deep cutting; he *can* cut deep,—and he does cut deep;—and he can cut fast, and he does cut fast;—and he can cut fantastically,—and he goes in for fancy. What is more, the white surface itself has no preciousness in it, but it becomes piquant when opposed with black shadow, and this flamboyant chiselling is therefore exactly, compared to a fine sculpture, what a Prout sketch is to a painting:—black and white,—against gentle and true colour.

13. Now what this Abbeville work is typically, all late northern work is broadly:—black and white sketching against perfect form; and what there is of good and bad in that method is all mingled in it. On the one hand there is not a greater distinction between vital sculpture for building, and dead sculpture, than that a true workman paints with his chisel,—does not carve the form of a thing, but cuts the effect of its form. In the great statue of Voltaire at the French Academy,[1]—a miracle of such work—the light in the eye is obtained by a projecting piece of marble. All Donatello's work—all Mino of Fiesole's—all

[1] [This is a slip of the pen for the Théâtre Français, in the *foyer* of which stands the celebrated statue of Voltaire by Houdon (1741–1828). Ruskin noted it in his diary of 1868:—

"*October* 7.—*Tartuffe* and Beaumarchais in evening. Note statue of Voltaire (Houdon); the light left in eyes by projecting point of marble; inimitable as realization in all points. Draperies perfect; as portraiture, impossible to go further."]

the loveliest Italian cinque-cento—is literally chisel-painting;[1] and it is continually apt to run into too much trick and under-cutting. I can't go into that, now—it begins with the use of the drill in Byzantium capitals. But the issue of it is that you have at last too much superficial effect, —too much trickery,—not enough knowledge of real form. But then you have a knowledge of effect which is quite consummate, and I know nothing in the whole range of art in which the touch is so exquisitely measured to its distance as in this flamboyant. Not one accent is ever lost,—it looks equally fine all over; but at forty feet above the eye you find it is actually so coarse that you cannot believe it is the work you saw from below.

But broadly;—here is the final corruption:—that it becomes a design of lace in white, on a black ground; not a true or intelligent rendering of organic form.[2]

14. And now we come to another physical condition. Flamboyant architecture is of stone in churches,—but contemporaneously of wood in houses.[3]

So you see—the workman's life practice is all in chalk, —or all in oak,—either in a soft effaceable thing, or a tough fibrous thing. His design becomes sketchy, for one cause;—and fibrous, nervous, and edgy for the other. For observe;—in carving wooden beams, you can always get an effect cheaply by bringing out your edges, but it is difficult to get a sharp edge out of marble without breaking it;—and impossible to cut a thin edge out of granite,—but in wood, up come the edges whether you like them or not, at every blow. That's the reason why dead game is so often carved in wood. You have only to jag at the

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 178.]

[2] [Here the MS. notes, "Before leaving the use of chalk, show Ward's gable"; that is, No. 44 in the Catalogue (see below, p. 276).]

[3] [The MS. here has a note, "Show Lisieux 37, François 1st 38"; that is, Prout's "Houses at Lisieux," No. 37 in the Catalogue, "showing the general arrangement of the ornamentation of timber houses in North France in the Flamboyant Period" (below, p. 275); and the photograph of the Maison de François I., in the Rue de la Tannerie at Abbeville, No. 38 in the Catalogue (below, p. 276). For other remarks on wooden and stone architecture, see *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, Vol. XIV. pp. 414 *seq.*]

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Details from the West Front of St. Vulfran, Abbeville

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feathers, and there they are. So, again, the grain of wood is tormenting if one has to cut forms across it, but it lends itself at once to a current curve with the grain. So that this sort of line becomes necessarily characteristic, and goes into the stone-work, till at last you have it insisted on, as in the 'prentice pillar at Roslin.[1] But more than this: working in wood, and living among woods, the carver was continually dealing with branches of trees, and he saw the beauty of leaves as connected with branches, more than any one ever did before; and he saw especially quantities of dead leaves, and got to like the way they twisted, from being used to it. Now I luckily happen once to have made a careful study of a cluster of dead oak leaves, and more luckily still, I kept the cluster I drew it from. There's a Flamboyant crocket for you![2]

15. Now for the moral part of it. So far as the workman knew what dead leaves were and loved them, the work is beautiful. But so far as he liked dead leaves better than living ones, and twigs of oak better than living creatures, it is a degraded one. Now see. Here at Abbeville, the leaves are either shrivelled and dead, or wrinkled as cabbage is wrinkled; but here at Bourges[3] is strong Gothic,—the leaves are all alive, smooth, glossy, elastic, and tender with youth. Here is the glow and the bloom of an unstinted vitality. Here literally is the frost,—here literally the wrinkles—of age.

16. Now the next character of this architecture is curiously mingled in physical and moral causes. Physically, it is architecture for a damp climate, in soft stone, which needed to be protected in the most delicate and important parts of the carving, as far as possible from rain, that it might not moulder, and that the faces might not be deformed by stains. So each statue, instead of being freely

[1] [See Vol. XVI. p. 373 *n.*]

[2] [No. 20 in the Catalogue (p. 272). The sketch is at Oxford, and the actual cluster is also preserved in the Ruskin Drawing School. With this passage compare *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series*, 1878, No. 285 (Vol. XX.).]

[3] [The reference is to No. 14 in the Catalogue (p. 271).]

exposed to sun and storm, as in Greece,—has its little canopy well projecting over it, and the niche becomes as important as the statue.[1] But note the moral part of this change. As people began to gain more civilized domestic habits, each man's house became of greater importance to him: each statue has a house of its own. And further,—as the world became more luxurious people began to think solitude more sacred; each saint, instead of joining in choir or procession, must have his own little den and cave, all to himself. So each holy statue has its own oratory, and every saint has his special tabernacle; and at last the saintship disappears in the seclusion; and all over England and France you have tabernacle work instead of sculpture, Shrines instead of Saints, and Canopies instead of Kings.

And I cannot—and I suppose I need not—follow out the relative moral change which that means,—of which before the last French Revolution we had seen enough.[2]

17. Now the next point of decline is not physical at all; it is wholly a mental matter—excess, namely, of ingenuity in construction. There is always a steady increase in this particular kind of skill in every school of building, from its birth to its fall. It builds more and more ingeniously every day, and at last expires in small mathematical conceits.

The first idea of construction is the simplest possible; two stones set on end, and another set on the top. That is Stonehenge construction,—it is Egyptian construction,—it is Greek construction. Not ingenious,—but very secure, if your stone is good. And with that simplest of constructions are connected, without any exception, all the best schools of sculpture; for there is no great sculpturesque school even of advanced Gothic, after the horizontal lintel

[1] [On this subject compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 330).]

[2] [Ruskin, it will be remembered, was an admirer of the Third Napoleon and his régime, which at the date of this lecture had not yet been overthrown. By "the last French Revolution" he thus means the *coup d'état* which placed Napoleon on the throne. For his description of the state of France before that event, see Vol. VIII. p. xxxii.]

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The Southern Porch: Abbeville

has quite vanished into the vault.[1] Well, next to this horizontal stone, come two stones, giving a gable;—then the arch, and then endless systems of narrower shafts and higher arches, until the mind of the builder is mainly occupied in finding new ways of making his work stand, and look as if it couldn't stand. Now there is nothing more delightful in their own way than these subtle contrivances of later Gothic, through which Strassburg tower stands up five hundred feet transparent as a cloud,—and Salisbury spire springs like the foam jet over a hollow wave,—foundationless.[2]

18. But, exactly in proportion as the builder's mind is occupied with these mechanical conditions, it is necessarily unoccupied by thoughts connected with human passion or historical event.

Mathematics are delightful and absorbing, but they are not pathetic; good mason's work, or good engineer's, is intensely satisfactory to the person doing it, and leaves him no time for sentiment, or for what it is now the somewhat vulgar fashion to call sentimentality.[3] And in exactly measured and inevitable degree, as architecture is more ingenious, it is less passionate. Only the other day I was speaking to one of our quite leading Gothic architects about the relative value of southern work and northern—equally good of their period,—and especially of the early school of Pisa as compared with that of France. My friend (we owe so much to him that he will pardon me for naming him,—Mr. Street[4]) alleged against the Pisan work that there was no construction in it, which is literally true—so true that I could make no defence at the time. It is rather pinned together than built;—but there

[1] [Compare the chapter on "The Arch Line" in *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. pp. 153 *seq.*).]

[2] [For another reference to the tower of Strassburg, see Vol. VIII. p. 165. For other references to Salisbury spire, see Vol. VIII. pp. 167, 203; Vol. IX. p. 332; and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 18.]

[3] [See below, § 27, p. 262.]

[4] [For other references to Street, see "The Study of Architecture"; above, p. 23 *n.*]

are two reasons for this. Architecture which is built with little bits of precious stone, must always be more like mosaic than that which is built of big bits of coarse stone;—but also, the builder's mind is far too busy in other and higher directions to care about construction. It is full of theology, of philosophy, of thoughts about fate, about love, about death,—about heaven and hell. It is not at all an interesting question with him how to make stones balance each other; but it is, how to reconcile doctrines;—the centre of gravity of vaults is of little moment with him,—but the centre of Fortitude in spirits is much;—not but that his arches and stones, however rudely balanced, did stick together somehow;[1] there is no defiance of construction in them, only no attention is paid to it; if the thing stands, that is all that is wanted. But I think you must see at once what a vital difference it must make at last in schools of building, whether their designer has his head full of mathematical puzzles, or of eager passions;—whether he is only a dextrous joiner, manufacturing hollow stone boxes,—or a poet, writing his book on pages of marble, and not much caring about the binding of them.

19. And herein, I am therefore able to give you an infallible test of the relative dignity of schools in all time. Some may be more learned than others,—some more graceful,—some more ingenious,—and others more severe; but the infallible test is,—the prevalence of the human element in their sculpture. Where the sculpture leads, and its passions, the school is great and living; where the masonry leads, and its problems,—there the school is mean and dying.

I have made a rough sketch for you here of the tomb of Can Grande, at Verona, which will at once show you what I mean.[2] It is an architecture entirely powerful and

[1] [Here Ruskin added in his first draft:—
"... somehow; and if in five hundred years Time gives as good an account of our houses in Belgravia as of Giotto's Campanile,—well, the worse for those that come after us."]

[2] [See No. 8 in the Catalogue (below, p. 270), and compare Plate XXIII. here.]

progressive, because wholly subordinate to figure sculpture. There is no lace work, no crocketing, no tracery, no construction to speak of; the one thing you look at is the image of the knight in his repose; and the one thing you think of is the life from which he reposes. But here[1] is a piece of architecture which is as assuredly dying as the other is progressive, in which the statue is nothing, and the canopy is everything, in which you are delighted by the loveliness of line, or the precision of balance,—but in which you are touched by no regret, and bear away with you no memory.

20. Now with this great moral change in the temper from passionate to mechanical, there is associated a most curious change in method of construction. When humanity and history were the main things in the architect's mind, his broad surfaces were everything to him, and his limiting lines unimportant. But when construction became principal with him, and story subordinate,—the shaft and the arch rib became everything, and the wall nothing,—until it was found that, in fact, a building might be constructed by nothing but ribs, a mere osseous thorax of a building, instead of a living body. And the critical moment,—the turn of fate,—the fastening of a disease that might be conquered, into disease that was mortal to Gothic architecture,—was what I long ago defined in the *Stones of Venice*, as the substitution of the line for the mass as the element of decoration.[2] For early work had walls covered with sculpture, and windows divided by pillars. Late work has its walls covered with lace, and its windows spun across with cobwebs. And this is not a mere increase in subtlety, or excess in quantity. It is total and fatal change in principle. Look here,—here's a picture,—and here's a frame. Early architecture decorated with this;—late architecture decorates with that. Literally,—and to the fullest

[1] [Probably No. 33 in the Catalogue (p. 275).]

[2] [Not in the *Stones of Venice*, but in the *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (ch. ii. § 23): see Vol. VIII. p. 90.]

extent,—this is true. In early work, you have a tablet covered with sculpture, and a decorated moulding round it;—that is all right; but in late work, you have no sculpture,—but are to enjoy the moulding.

21. But now observe, secondly: it is interwoven Architecture.[1] Not merely linear,—but flexibly linear, twisted and wreathed so as to make the stone look ductile. Herein is its great distinction from the English perpendicular; and it is an entirely essential distinction. And to an architect it would necessarily appear that in this it was inferior to the English school,—and that pretending to make stone look not like stone, and defying many of the laws of mechanical structure, it had forfeited all title to be ranked with the rigid legitimacy of buildings. And that is in the main, true; this system of interweaving is an abandonment of the principle, which is, that every material should have its qualities insisted on, not disguised; and that all ornament is wrong which contradicts or conceals the laws of stable masonry. But it is necessary that the true root and cause of this character should be understood, before we can judge it justly.

22. You are doubtless all aware that from the earliest times, a system of interwoven ornament has been peculiarly characteristic of northern design, reaching greatest intensity of fancy in the Irish manuscripts represented by the Book of Kells,[2]—and universal in Scandinavia and among the Norman race. But you may not have considered,—that, disguised by other and more subtle qualities, the same instinct is manifest in the living art of the whole world. This delight in the embroidery, intricacy of involution,—the labyrinthine wanderings of a clue, continually lost, continually recovered, belongs—though in a more chastised and delicate phase—as much to Indian, to Arabian, to Egyptian, and to Byzantine work, as to that of Norway and Ireland;—nay, it existed just as strongly in the Greek

[1] [See again *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. pp. 91–92.]
[2] [At Trinity College, Dublin; of the second half of the seventh century.]

mind in its best times; only as all other powers and instincts of art were theirs besides, the Greeks never narrowed their ingenuity into mere looping and knotting of lines, and they brought out their delight in involution, only in subordination to truth of human and animal form. What is with a Byzantine nothing but basket work, is with the Greek a confusion of limbs of the horses as they turn in a chariot race; and what with a Norman would have been only a running troop of hunted beasts, or creeping thicket of twisted branches, is with the Greek a procession of youths and maidens. But in all living art this love of involved and recurrent line exists, — and exists essentially—it exists just as much in music as in sculpture, and the continually lost and recovered threads and streams of melody in a perfect fugue, correspond precisely in their sweet science of bewildering succession, to the loveliest traceries over the gold of an early missal, or to the fantasies of the stone work, in which you would have thought some fairy's hand

> "Twixt poplars straight the osier wand
> In many a freakish wreath had twined;
> Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
> And changed the willow wreaths to stone."[1]

23. But I must pass on quickly to the essential character of it,—this interweaving,—that from which it has its name—Flamboyant.

I was showing you a few minutes ago the difference between the elastic lines of early sculpture, and the crisped, contracted lines of late sculpture. But there is a worse character of lines than crispness. There is the character of relaxation. You may lose the spring of youth in two ways. By stiffening of age, or by languor,—and the languor is the worse of the two. And that is the way in which the lines of ornamental design corrupted themselves at this period everywhere, not in Gothic only,—nay, not so much

[1] [*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto ii. stanza 11: quoted also in Vol. XIV. p. 415.]

in Gothic as in the Renaissance that was superseding it. Everywhere loose lines of fillets, ribands, and weakly or wildly undulatory drapery, were beginning to be chosen in preference to the elastic lines of organic form; and thus, to the smallest particular, the forms of art echoed the temper of their age; the fluttered line announced the feeble will, and the unbound robe, the licentious temper.

24. But in the Northern Gothic, and especially in this flamboyant school, there was another and a quite nobler influence at work; there *was* this licentiousness; but with it there was a strange fear and melancholy, which had descended unbroken from the gloom of Scandinavian religion,—which was associated always with the labour, the darkness, and the hardships of the North, and which in its resistance to the increasing luxury of the time, took now a feverish and frantic tendency towards the contemplation of death,[1]—clinging to this as its only rebuke and safety, tempted by luxury on one side, and tormented by remorse upon the other,—and most of all by the great baseness of illiterate Christianity in the fear of a physical hell[2]—mingled with indignation against the vices of the priests,—which brought a bitter mockery and low grotesque into the art that had once breathed in affectionate faith and childish obedience. So that you have the pensiveness of Albert Dürer's Melencholia, and the majesty of his Knight walking with Death,—and the fantasy and fever of his Apocalypse,—and the luxury of his wanton and floating Fortune,[3] —and the insatiable intensity of redundant minuteness, and as it were an avarice of nothing in his pebbles and leaves; and you have the mixed mockery and despair of Holbein's Dance of Death,—and a thousand such others,—and all the

[1] [See Nos. 26–31 in the Catalogue (below, p. 274), which were shown to illustrate this part of the lecture. The "Melencholia" and "Knight" are reproduced in Vol. VII. pp. 310, 312.]

[2] [Compare Vol. XVII. p. 360, and Vol. XVIII. p. 302.]

[3] [For other references to the "Apocalypse," see Vol. VI. p. 265; Vol. XI. p. 172; *Ariadne Florentina*, § 260, and *Art of England*, § 101. For the "Fortune," see Vol. XV. p. 411, and *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 169, 252. For Dürer's "gloomily minute" detail, see Vol. III. p. 186.]

powers and instincts of which these were the sign, thrilling and contending in the breasts of men, and forcing themselves into every line of the last forms of the shrines of their expiring religion. So that the very threads of the now thin and nervous stone work catch the ague of mixed wantonness and terror, and—weak with unwholesome and ominous fire—flamboyant with a fatal glow—tremble in their ascent as if they were seen through troubled and heated air, over a desert horizon;—and lose themselves at last in the likeness,—no more as the ancient marbles, of the snows of Olympus,—but of the fires of condemnation.

25. Now you have just heard how in that faultless and intensely perceptive description of Melrose, which was built just at this period,—Scott fastened at once on the characteristic structural feature—interweaving. Much more did he feel and fasten upon this spiritual character, and, as in few words he has made memorable to you the art of this masonry,—so in a few sweet verses, which tell the legend of another, the fairest building of this time in Scotland,—he will make memorable to you the sadness, the foreboding of death, and the feverish and unconsoling superstition which haunted, as they vanished, the last of the Gothic spires.[1]

26. I have hitherto traced for you only the weaknesses

[1] [Here no doubt Ruskin read some lines from the ballad of Rosabelle (*Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto vi. stanza 23):—

"O'er Roslin all that dreary night,
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moon-beam . . .

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply . . .

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair."

Roslin Chapel was founded in 1446, but was not finished till the end of the century. St. Vulfran's at Abbeville (commenced 1488) was thus of about the same date.]

and errors of this architecture, or its vain beauty. I have not yet told you the great one fault by which it fell. Commonly it is said of all Gothic, that it rose in simplicity, that it declined by becoming too florid and too rich.

Put that error at once out of your minds. All beautiful and perfect art, literature or nature, is rich. Titian is rich, Beethoven is rich, Shakespeare is rich, and the forests, and the fields, and the clouds are richest of all. And the two most beautiful Gothic pieces of work in the world,—the South door of the Cathedral of Florence, and the North transept door of the Cathedral of Rouen,[1]—were both in the thirteenth century covered with sculpture as closely as a fretted morning sky with sands of cloud.[2]

But the Gothic fell, because its wealth was empty and its profusion heartless; it fell, because men had become meanly fanciful and vainly sad, or viciously gay,—because it had ceased to be earnest, and ceased to be sincere.

27. I observe that lately among our artists there has been a singular crusade against the word "Sentiment." In the very meeting of the Architects' Institute, to which I have already referred,[3] another of its members declared that he never could see anything but absurdity in the idea that Gothic architecture owed any of its merits to the Sentimentality of the People at large.[4] That the idea appeared absurd to him, I do not wonder; but the fact,—singular as it may be,—was actually so, that in these days the

[1] [For another reference to the rich finish on the South door of the Cathedral of Florence, see *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. p. 174; and for the North transept door of Rouen, *ibid.*, pp. 89, 165, and Plate X.]

[2] [Compare the description of clouds "waved like sand" above, p. xlii. *n.*]

[3] [See above, § 18; the reference, however, is to the first draft in the MS., where Ruskin particularised his reference to "the somewhat vulgar fashion to call sentiment" by allusion to Professor Kerr.]

[4] [The reference is to a discussion which took place at a meeting of the Institute on June 8, 1868, upon a paper read at a previous meeting by Mr. Digby Wyatt on "The Foreign Artists employed in England during the Sixteenth Century." In the course of the discussion Ruskin had been quoted, and Professor Kerr said: "What we have had so often laid before us we have had repeated once more to-night—that in the Middle Ages architecture flourished in consequence of the enthusiastic sentimentality in the people at large. I, for one, never could see anything but the greatest absurdity in such an idea" (*Sessional Papers*, 1867–1868, p. 252).]

people at large had sentiments, and acted upon them,—and that their architecture owed to these, not only its merits, but even its existence; for, to take one central and characteristic instance: "One saw at the re-erection of the front of Chartres in 1145"—these are the words of an eye-witness: "One saw people of wealth and power, accustomed to a life of ease, harness themselves in crowds to the carts that carried the stones; and though sometimes a thousand persons, men and women, — so vast were the weights that had to be drawn — were harnessed to one chariot, there reigned so great a silence that no murmur was heard; only when they stopped to rest, they spoke: making confession of their sins with prayers and tears."[1] Very absurd, doubtless—but an entirely practical business; —and perhaps, in another seven hundred years, we may also seem absurd to those who shall come after us, — though our sentiments, such as they are, and the burdens we have laid on ourselves, and the chariots we have dragged, may leave behind them no monument of imbecility like the towers of Chartres Cathedral.

But be that as it may, this was the reason that the Gothic fell,—that it had lost to the core its faith, its truth, and its sensibility, and was incapable alike of being grafted with the grace of a Pagan religion, or communicating, even to one generation more, the humility—or the glory—of its own.[2]

28. Finally. Architecture can only be built by a Thoughtful Nation, and a Pure Nation, living up to its conscience,—who have a Common Pride, and a Common-Wealth.

By a Thoughtful Nation. It cannot be built by clowns, or by people who are generally low in sphere of thought and power of intellect. It does not matter how good they

[1] [Translated from a letter of Haimon, Abbé of Saint Pierre-sur-Dives, which is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. It is cited, with other contemporary documents to like effect, in the Abbé Bulteau's *Monographie de la Cathédrale de Chartres*, vol. i. p. 91.]

[2] [Here, again, compare *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. pp. 98, 99.]

are, if they are foolish or simple, or busied chiefly and earnestly in vulgar business. It is right in Cheshire to care for cheese,—right in Newcastle to be occupied in coals,—right in the Highlands to be interested in grouse;—but a nation interested only in cheese or coal or grouse cannot be architects. You can only have great buildings when the rulers or guides of the people are eagerly occupied—unselfishly—in the highest spheres of intellect open to them in their age.

29. Then, secondly, I said, by a Pure people. That is to say, the arts being intensely the work of Human creatures, can only be attained by them in the measure of their humanity, in the degree of their separation from brutes, both in thought and character. Cathedrals can't be built by lambs, and they can't be built by serpents or swine. However loving you are, you must have brains—or you can't build; and however clever you are, you must be affectionate and self-commandant,—or you can't build. I don't say how far we are, or are not this,—but only,—that just so far, we can have art, and no farther. So much as there is in us of serpent or of swine, of malice or of greed,—so much less there is of art capacity; and so far as we are affectionate and temperate, or self-commandant,—so much more we have of art-capacity.

30. Thirdly: Architecture is possible only to a people who have a Common Pride, and a Common-Wealth,—whose Pride is Civic,—and is the Pride of All.

Good architecture can't be built by Modest people; you must be very saucy, and think yourselves very fine people before you can build,—but your pride must be in what you *all do*, and all *are*. Among us, I notice that it is always individual. We want to do a thing by ourselves, to say a thing that other people have not said,—to get it allowed by them that we did it or we said it. Now when people have real faculty for art, they never care much about putting their names to what they have done. You hardly ever get at a Greek workman's name; hardly ever

at a Gothic workman's; but there is always the strongest and brightest National or Civic pride,—the determination that they will have the noblest temple or the highest tower for a thousand miles round.[1]

Fourthly. No architecture can be built but by a nation which has a common wealth,—a common well-being. And this first in a most literal way. There must be perfect freemasonry and unity among all the workmen, from highest to lowest; and the salaries of the highest must not be high, and of the lowest not mean or miserable. There must be gradations of authority, according to faculty,—and that will always be naturally and necessarily given to the man who can design most brilliantly; all the others will look for government and for working drawings;—he will be the master mason,—but he must be nothing more: difference of authority—yes; difference of pay,—no—or at least in very small degree. It is the greatest glory of a King, or General, or a Master of Craft,—to be poor. Not only their greatest glory, but their greatest power. No rich king—no rich captain—no rich craftsman—ever has his arm free. You will find that a notable lantern to take with you in reading history. Look—if you want to know where nations are in power—Look if their kings are poor—there, their kings are strong. Look where masters have low wages —there, they are masters indeed.

31. And for the practical application of this, I will give you a direct and sharp one. And there is nothing, of all I have had to tell you, *more* certain,—nothing for us at present so immediately needing to be told.

No architecture will ever be possible where the *master workman has a commission on the cost.*[2] Pay him a salary—a high one if you choose—though you had better not, —but always salary, not commission. Pay your masters only as working men; but masters and men together as

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says of the rivalry between Beauvais and Amiens: *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 19 (Vol. XII. pp. 38–39).]

[2] [Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 5.]

gentlemen,—and you may yet see a chisel handled again by an English hand, as in the days of old.

82. But, further—and last of lastest. There must be commonwealth, as regards those for whom you build, as well as by whom you build. We shall never make our houses for the rich beautiful, till we have begun by making our houses for the poor beautiful. As it is a common and diffused pride, so it is a common and diffused delight on which alone our future arts can be founded.

Delight—observe. We have seen that Gothic architecture fell, not by its luxury, but its despondency. You may have as much luxury as you like, when everybody is at ease,—and as much mirth as you can win, so that everybody be cheerful. I don't ask you to drag carts full of stones, nor to think all day long of Death. Nay, you must think less of Death—in play—and not have so much cause to think of it in earnest. You must not build for pleasure in the front of the house, while there is despair at the back of it.

Do you recollect in Mr. Helps' beautiful story of Realmah, what Ellesmere's final maxim about architecture is? "Never mind the outside."[1] I suppose Ellesmere himself knew, but I doubt if all his hearers knew, how deep it went.

Never mind the outside. Never mind the houses that look to the Park. Mind the houses that look into Seven Dials. You have just heard authentically from Dr. Hawksley,[2] that you are paying seven millions a year for your London poor, and that Pauperism is on the increase. You fancy perhaps that by giving so much, you show how much you care for them. Ah, no; that is the fine you pay for not caring for them. Give the half of that, in love; you

[1] [*Realmah, by the author of "Friends in Council,"* 1868, vol. ii. pp. 294, 298.]

[2] [The reference is to a paper read at a meeting of the Association for the Prevention of Pauperism and Crime in the Metropolis on December 17, 1868, by Thomas Hawksley, M.D., and afterwards published as a pamphlet (*The Charities of London*, 1869). The figures referred to by Ruskin will be found at pp. 7, 8; those of expenditure on the poor include London public charities, estimate of private alms, etc.]

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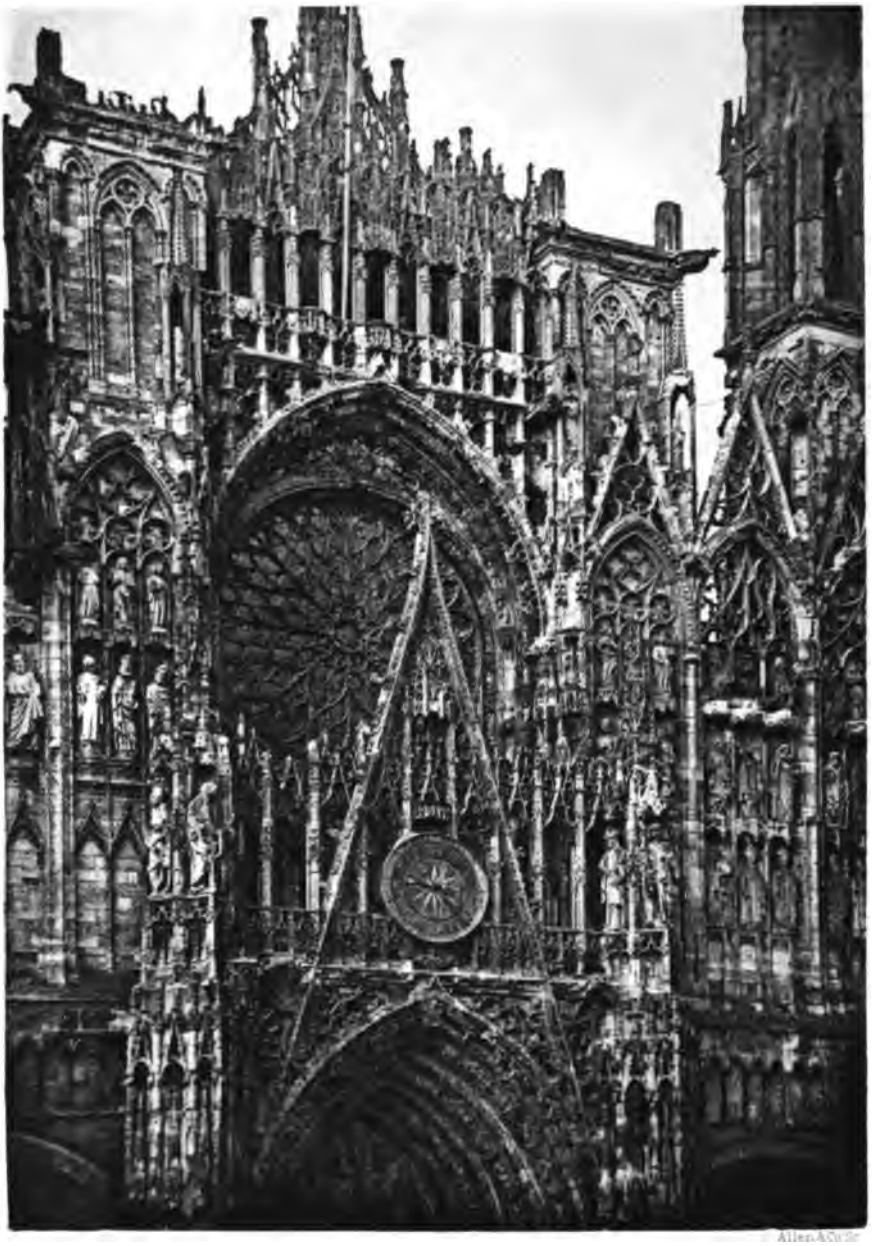

The West Front of Rouen Cathedral

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need not give the other half in money. Register them—look after them—let the air and sun in among them;—instead of thinking it pious to light candles by daylight,[1] think it pious to light windows where there's only candle-light; and you will find you soon will have the best half of your seven millions to spare, that you may spend in magnificence what you wasted in misery,—and bringing back the true Saints to their shrines, and building a tabernacle work that shall keep out the wind and the rain from shivering bodies,—carve a victorious St. George and a prostrate Flamboyant Dragon over every poor man's door.

[1] [An allusion to the Ritualistic movement, prompted by Ruskin's talks with the tallow-chandler at Abbeville: see above, Introduction, pp. xli., xlii.]

References to the Series of Paintings and Sketches, from Mr. Ruskin's Collection, shown in Illustration of the Relations of Flamboyant Architecture to contemporary and subsequent Art.

1. Portrait of the Doge Andréa Gritti. By *Titian.*

   Showing the relation of Venetian Art to Venetian Character, and the subordination of rich and minute decorative design to faultless breadth of treatment.

   Naturalist art of the highest school.[1]

2. Study from the Remains of the Fresco of St. Catherine, by Luini. In the Monasterio Maggiore at Milan. (*R.*)*

   The original work is a perfect type of the rare unison of ideal purity of conception, with consummate decorative and pictorial power.

   Purist art of the highest school.[2]

3. Portrait of Napoleon 1st. By *Meissonier.*

   Realistic art of the lower school; but consummate of its kind. Look at it with the lens.

   Showing the relation of the disturbed and dramatic manner of modern art, to the disquietude of National Character.[3]

4. Boys. By *William Hunt.*

   Happy and rustic art, employed on happy and rustic subject. To be compared with the Napoleon, in order farther to show the relations of art and character.[4]

* The studies marked (*R.*) are by my own hand. This one was made for the Arundel Society, to show, as far as possible, in facsimile, the state of the existing fresco.

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[1] [See above, §§ 8, 11, pp. 248, 250, for notices of this portrait; and for other particulars, see the Introduction, p. lxxvi.]

[2] [See above, § 8, p. 248, for a notice of this copy; and for Ruskin's letters when he was making it, Introduction, pp. lxxii.–lxxiv.]

[3] [See above, § 9, p. 249; and for further notices of this picture, which Ruskin showed again in 1879–1880 at the Prout and Hunt Exhibition, see Vol. XIV. pp. 381, 438 and *n.*]

[4] [See above, § 9, p. 249. The drawing is now No. 143 in the Rudimentary Series at Oxford.]

5. A French Cottage Interior. By *Edward Frère.*

Showing the perfect phase of simple domestic art in France. It is more pensive than in England, and trained in a severe school of subdued chiaroscuro.
This work of Frère's is quite exquisite in this respect.[1]

6. Griffin on North Side of Porch of Duomo of Verona.

Gothic sculpture of finest style. (*Circa* 1200?) (*R.*)
The curves all springy and strong, or disciplined into expression (as in the writhe of the serpent). Nothing loose, nothing fillet or riband-like. Sketched at Verona, 1852.[2]

7. Griffin on South Side of Porch of Duomo, Verona. (*R.*)

Showing the same general characters. Sketched at Verona, 1845.[3]

8. Pencil Study of the Tomb of Can Grande, at Verona. (*R.*)

(From daguerreotype, and detail drawings taken in 1852.) Showing the noble manner of regarding death on which the greatest art was founded.
Circa 1340. Gothic sculpture and architecture of the consummately highest class.[4]

9. Pencil Sketch (unfinished) of Tomb of Mastino, Verona. (*R.*)

Showing the same peace in manner of contemplating death, and co-relative perfectness in Gothic style.[5]

10. Sketch of one of the Gables of the Canopy of the same Tomb. "The Death of Abel." (*R.*)

Showing right relations of sculpture to surfaces and mouldings, and right use of inlaid marbles.

[1] [For another reference to this picture (which used to hang in Ruskin's rooms at Corpus) of a girl peeling carrots by a cottage fire, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 111. Compare the notices of Frère in Vol. XIV. pp. 143, 174, 347. At p. 142 of that volume another of Frère's interiors—"The Child's Prayer"—is reproduced. See also above, p. 199.]

[2] [This sketch was engraved in *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 140). A later sketch of the same griffin was No. 4 in the "Verona" Catalogue: see below, p. 449.]

[3] [This may have been the drawing which is reproduced as Plate XIV. in Vol. XII. p. 193.]

[4] [This sketch was also No. 21 in the "Verona" Catalogue (see below, p. 454). There are three drawings of the subject by Ruskin at Oxford (Reference Series, No. 57, and Educational Series, Nos. 76 and 77). No. 8 here was either the first or the second of them. Plate XXIII. here is from Reference Series, No. 57, with details added from Educational Series, No. 77.]

[5] [Probably No. 58 in the Reference Series at Oxford.]

11. Study of the Sculpture of Adam and Eve, on another Gable of the same Tomb.[1]

Entirely perfect as an example of architectural treatment of foliage and figure.
Eve's foot rests on a lamb—a lovely expression of her trust, as the "mother of all living."[2]
Admirably drawn for me, at Verona, by Mr. J. Bunney.[3]

12. Study of Tomb over Cemetery Gate, St. Anastasia, Verona. (R.)

Chiefly for its mass and colour.
Showing right subordination of minor ornament.
Gothic of the highest class.
Sketched at Verona, 1852.[4]

13. Front of Chartres Cathedral.

Finest early French style. Figure sculpture principal, as the element of decoration.

14. Central French Gothic.

Two arches (about the real size) from left flank of main entrance at Bourges.
Naturalist decorative sculpture of the highest class.
Enlarged from Photograph by Mr. A. Burgess.[5]

15. The Flamboyant Element in Greek Art, associated with Metal Work.

The fountain Arethusa. (*R.*)
Study of coin of Syracuse. The hair representing typically the currents of the fountain mingling with the sea. *Circa* 400 B.C.[6]

16. The Flamboyant Element in Greek Art.

Rough study of head of Lacinian Juno, on coin of Crotona. Hair typically representing drifts of storm. (*R.*)[7]

[1] [This study is now No. 92 in the Rudimentary Series at Oxford.]
[2] [Genesis iii. 20.]
[3] [See above, Introduction, pp. l., li.]
[4] [This drawing of the Castelbarco Tomb is reproduced as Plate D, opposite p. 176 in Vol. IX.; see also *ibid.*, p. li.]
[5] [For Burgess, see Vol. XIV. pp. xxxii.–xxxiii., 349–356.]
[6] [For other notices of this coin, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 21 and Plate II.]
[7] [Ruskin showed this study in one of his Oxford lectures: see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 145.]

17. THE FLAMBOYANT ELEMENT IN CENTRAL ITALIAN ART.

Study of head. Leonardo da Vinci. (Photograph.[1])
Feverish delight in wild curvature in hair; enhanced by dwelling much, and with intense minuteness of study, on the lines of clouds and currents of water. (See drawings at Windsor.)
Very beautiful of its class.
The original is in the Louvre, and much more beautiful; the photograph darkens it.

18. THE FLAMBOYANT ELEMENT IN CENTRAL ITALIAN ART. "Judith." By *Andrea Mantegna*.[2]

Feverish delight in fillets and curled hair.
Note especially the head of Holofernes.

19. THE FLAMBOYANT ELEMENT IN CENTRAL ITALIAN ART.

Oak leaves slightly too flowing, soft, and undulatory.
Study in chalk, made for me by a French draughtsman, to show the exact touches of Correggio's brush in the central group of leaves in the Antiope.[3]
First-rate of its kind.

20. THE FLAMBOYANT ELEMENT IN NATURAL FORM.

Frost-bitten oak leaves. (*R.*)
Compare with finial and crocket decorations of Abbeville.
Exquisitely engraved from my sketch, by Mr. J. Armytage.[4]

21. THREE MADONNAS. By *Albert Dürer*.

Showing the principal conditions of Flamboyant design in figures; angular and much divided drapery, violently-curled hair; interlaced ornamentation (note the sceptre, crowns, and wattled fence), and feverish intensity of detail everywhere.[5]

[1] [Perhaps "a little red chalk drawing which every one remembers who has seen the drawings at the Louvre . . . a face set in the shadow of its own hair" (Pater's *Renaissance*, 1873, p. 108). The large collection of drawings by Leonardo in the Library of Windsor Castle contains a large number of studies of "waves, whirlwinds, hurricanes, and cyclones" (see E. Müntz, *Leonardo da Vinci*, vol. ii. p. 275, of the English edition); compare "Verona, and its Rivers," § 31 (below, p. 447).]

[2] [This was no doubt a photograph of the drawing in the Uffizi.]

[3] [For other references to this picture in the Louvre, see Vol. VII. pp. 53, 117, 416.]

[4] [See above, § 14, p. 253. The engraving by J. C. Armytage is Plate 53 ("The Dryad's Crown") in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 53). The original drawing is now in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford (Educational Series, No. 264).]

[5] [One of the engravings here shown was "The Virgin crowned by two Angels" (with a wattled fence behind), which Ruskin reproduced in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 247; see also *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series*, No. 66, and No. 74 in the Educational Series for another "Madonna Crowned." For Dürer's "feverish intensity of detail," see above, § 24, p. 260 *n.*]

22. THREE SUBJECTS FROM THE PASSION. By *Albert Dürer.*

Giving additional instances of the characteristics of Flamboyant design. Grotesque developed, both in figures and their dress. Great pleasure taken in the curls of the hair, interweaving of the crown of thorns, and spiny helmet and weapons. Tassels, wrinkled folds, and fillets or straps—*linear* decoration of every kind—made too important.

(Consummate art of its class however, never surpassed in thoughtful masterhood of line engraving, or in its special phase of imagination.)[1]

23. *Albert Dürer's* "JUSTICE," *Giotto's, and Raphael's.*

Dürer's literally "Flamboyant"—the face on fire. The conception distorted and terrible.

Giotto's entirely noble and pure in conception; but childish and feeble in workmanship.

Raphael's, affected and false in conception; perfect in workmanship. Both Giotto's and Raphael's entirely peaceful, and free from the disturbing Northern Terror.[2]

24. COSTUMES. By *Holbein.* (Photograph.)

Flamboyant characters of curvature and fillet decoration. Showing the influences in character and fashion which corrupted architecture.

Splendid in drawing. The centre one unsurpassably fine as pen and sepia work. The originals are at Basle.[3]

25. DEAD CHRIST. By *Holbein.* (Photograph.) Original at Basle.

Showing the dark and sad manner of contemplating death, which gradually corrupted both the religion and art of the northern nations. Very wonderful of its kind.[4]

[1] [Some of these subjects also were afterwards placed by Ruskin in his collection at Oxford: see *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, No. 124.]

[2] [Dürer's "Justice" is a small engraving, showing a figure seated on a lion; holding the scales in his left hand and a sword, uplifted, in his right. Giotto's (in the Arena Chapel) is engraved as the frontispiece to *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 11: see also *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 398). Raphael's figure of Justice is a fresco in the Vatican. Ruskin placed photographs of the Giotto and the Raphael in his Oxford collection: see his note in the *Catalogue of the Standard Series*, No. 18.]

[3] [Compare in the Oxford collection, Educational Series, No. 120, and Nos. 234, 235.]

[4] [For another note on this picture in the Basle Museum, see *Lectures on Art*, § 150.]

26. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH.[1] Coat of Arms. By *Albert Dürer.*

Feverish delight in flamboyant violence of curvature. The Satyr's head is, to my belief, the best bit of design and engraving of this class, existing.[2]

27. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH. In its noblest phase. *Dürer's* "Knight and Death."[3]

28. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH. "The Dragon of the Hesperides." *J. M. W. Turner.*

Flamboyant curvature in flames and clouds. Well studied from the picture in the National Gallery, by Mr. J. Bunney.[4]

29. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH. In its noblest phase. "Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah." (Liber Studiorum.) *J. M. W. Turner.*[5]

30. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH.

Beginning to be sensational. "Death the Avenger," and "Death the Friend." *Alfred Rethel.*[6]

31. DEGRADED CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH FOR MERE PLEASURE IN SENSATION.

When the mind is jaded, and has become incapable of receiving emotion from beauty: last stage of feverish disease in this direction. Japanese art (war ships exploding in a battle), and battle pieces by Gustave Doré.[7]

[1] [For remarks on Nos. 26–31, see above, § 24 (p. 260).]

[2] [This is the "Coat of Arms with a Skull": No. 65 in the *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series.* See also Vol. XI. p. 172, and *Eagle's Nest*, § 155.]

[3] [See Plate D in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 310).]

[4] [No. 477. See Vol. VII. p. 389 (the dragon is engraved as Plate 78); Vol. XIII. pp. 113 *seq.*; and *Lectures on Landscape*, §§ 69–71. A copy of the dragon was afterwards placed in Ruskin's Art Collection at Oxford: see *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 156.]

[5] [See *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series*, No. 175, and compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 386, 434).]

[6] [For notices of these engravings, see *Elements of Drawing*, Vol. XV. p. 223.]

[7] [For Ruskin's opinion of Japanese art, see *Time and Tide*, § 26; and of Doré, *ibid.*, § 30 (Vol. XVII. pp. 341, 344).]

32. FLAMBOYANT ARCHITECTURE IN VENICE. (*R.*)

Corrupt. The richness remaining, but the fancy gone. Tracery the only ornament.
Casa Contarini-Fasan.
Sketched in 1841.[1]

33. FRENCH ADVANCED GOTHIC, ON THE EDGE OF DECLINE.

The sculpture less important. The mouldings and frame becoming principal.
South Transept, Rouen Cathedral.

34. FRENCH ADVANCED GOTHIC.

Sculpture taking too much the look of Incrustation.
Frontal of Rheims.[2]

35. GERMAN ADVANCED GOTHIC.

Affectation and violence of curve in gesture of figures.
Statues from porch of Strasburg.[3]

36. ABBEVILLE—TOWERS OF ST. VULFRAN, SEEN OVER TIMBER HOUSES, SOME THIRTY YEARS AGO.

The principal group of houses in the centre is now pulled down.
Pencil sketch by Samuel Prout. Admirable in choice of position, and seizure of essential character.[4]

37. HOUSES AT LISIEUX. *Samuel Prout.*

Showing the general arrangement of the ornamentation of timber houses in North France in the Flamboyant period; pinnacles flanking windows, and crocketed arch over door. Prout, being near-sighted, could not give the finer details of the ornament.[5]

[1] [This drawing is in this edition reproduced as Plate 2 in *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 212).]
[2] [Probably a photograph; afterwards No. 80 in the Rudimentary Series at Oxford.]
[3] [Again a photograph, afterwards No. 82 in the Rudimentary Series.]
[4] [Plate IX. in Vol. XIV. (p. 395).]
[5] [Plate XV. in Vol. XIV. (p. 414). For a reference in the lecture to this example, see § 14 *n.* (p. 252).]

38. ABBEVILLE.—SPIRAL STAIRCASE IN A HOUSE OF THE FINEST FLAMBOYANT PERIOD.

Photograph taken for me in September last year, when the real vine added its own piece of "redundant" decoration to all the rest.[1]
Perfect work of its class.

39. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN, FROM THE NORTH. (*R.*)

Showing general effect of towers and ruined wall of transept.

40. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN—GABLES OF THE CHAPELS OF NORTH AISLE. (*R.*)

Sketched only for their colour, and beauty of worn age. They are soon to be scraped clean—it will be long before the cottage floors are.

41. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN FROM THE EAST. (*R.*)

Showing height of ruined transept wall and old houses of the "Pont d'Amour."[2]

42. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN. (Evening.) (*R.*)

43. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN AND THE GREAT SQUARE. (*R.*)

Showing gabled wooden houses of the sixteenth century (though all much defaced, the two in the angle are characteristic), and quoined brick and stone houses of the seventeenth century.[3]

44. ABBEVILLE.—GABLED HOUSE OF BRICK AND CHALK, WITH TREES OF AVENUE BEFORE COUNTY COURT.

Excellently sketched for me by my assistant, Mr. W. Ward.[4]

45. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN—THE WESTERN PORCH.

Photograph taken in 1868.

[1] [Plate VII. in Vol. XIV. (p. 388).]
[2] [An engraving of this drawing by J. C. Armytage is Plate IX. here.]
[3] [For particulars of the drawing (Plate VIII. here), see above, Introduction, p. lxxv.]
[4] [For a reference in the lecture to this example, see § 13 *n.* (p. 252).]

46. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN—NORTH DOOR OF WESTERN PORCH.

47. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN—CENTRAL DOOR OF WESTERN PORCH.

48. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN—SOUTH DOOR OF WESTERN PORCH.[1]

49. FRENCH LATE GOTHIC.

Gable over Central Porch, Rouen Cathedral.
Sculpture vanishing, Frame and Moulding principal.
As Flamboyant decoration, best of its kind.
Enlarged from Photograph, by Mr. G. Allen.[2]

50. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN—GABLE OF SOUTH DOOR OF WESTERN PORCH

Enlarged from Photograph, by Mr. Allen.

[1] [It is not explained whether Nos. 46–48 were sketches or photographs. If the former, No. 48 was no doubt Plate XII. here.]

[2] [The enlargement by Mr. Allen is at Brantwood; Plate XIII. here is reproduced from the negative which was taken by Mr. Burgess. For a reference to this gable, see *Queen of the Air*, § 103; below, p. 390.]

VIII

THE QUEEN OF THE AIR

(1869)

THE
QUEEN OF THE AIR:

BEING

A STUDY OF THE GREEK MYTHS

OF

CLOUD AND STORM.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 15, WATERLOO PLACE.
1869.

[*The Right of Translation is reserved.*]

[*Bibliographical Note.—The Queen of the Air* is made up of the following material:—

(1) Lecture I. (§§ 1–50): a lecture partly delivered at University College, London, on Tuesday, March 9, 1869. Of this lecture no report appeared at the time. One passage in it (§ 42) was incorporated from the Rede Lecture at Cambridge in 1867: see above, p. 176.

(2) Lecture II. (§§ 51–100): this lecture had not been delivered.

(3) Of Lecture III., the following paragraphs had not previously been spoken or printed: §§ 101, 106–127 (in part), 132 (in part) –134 (in part), 143 (in part), and 160.

(4) §§ 102–105 had been delivered as part of a lecture at the Royal Institution on *The Flamboyant Architecture of the Somme*, on Friday, January 29, 1869 (see above, p. 248). No report of the lecture appeared at the time. As Ruskin says that this portion of the lecture "will be better read in this place [*Queen of the Air*] than in its incidental connection with" Abbeville, the passages are in this volume excluded from the lecture and given in *Queen of the Air*.

(5) §§ 127–132 (in part) and § 134 (in part) had appeared in 1868 in the pamphlet *Notes on the General Principles of Employment for the Destitute and Criminal Classes*. For the bibliographical note on this, see Vol. XVII. p. 541 *n*. These paragraphs, having already been printed in this edition (*ibid.*, pp. 541–546), are not repeated in the present volume.

(6) §§ 135–159 had appeared in 1865 in *The Cestus of Aglaia*. For the bibliographical note on this, see above, p. 45. These paragraphs are, in this volume, printed in *The Cestus* (above, pp. 72–81 and 120–133), and are not repeated here.

(7) §§ 161 to end ("The Hercules of Camarina") had been delivered as an address to the Students of the Art School of South Lambeth on March 15, 1869. Of this address no report appeared at the time.

The book made up of the above-mentioned materials has appeared in several editions, as follow:—

First Edition (1869).—The title-page is as shown here on the preceding leaf. Crown 8vo, pp. viii.+199. Preface (here pp. 291–294), pp. iii.–viii.; Text, pp. 1–199. Imprint (in the centre of the last page): "London: Printed by Smith, Elder & Co., Old Bailey, E.C." Headlines, as in this edition. Issued on June 22, 1869, in green cloth boards, lettered across the back: "The | Queen | of the | Air. | Ruskin. | Smith, Elder & Co." Price 6s.

The paragraphs were numbered consecutively throughout the volume. This was the first of Ruskin's books in which this plan was adopted: he

speaks of the volume (§ 101) as the first of the series of his corrected works, and adopts in it the plan of numbered paragraphs which henceforth he always followed. He had intended to mark the volume as one of a new series on the title-page, for he said to Professor Norton, "Write me a title-page to go with all the series and with 'The Queen of the Air' subordinate" (*Letters to Norton*, vol. i. p. 204).

Second Edition (1869).—A verbatim reprint, and exact reproduction in binding, etc., of the First, except for the addition of the words "Second Edition" upon the title-page. Issued on August 24, 1869.

Third, or Collected "Works," Edition (1874).—This was Volume IX. of the Works, the general title-page being:—

> The | Works of John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christ Church, Oxford. | Volume IX. | The Queen of the Air. | [*Rose.*] | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1874.

The particular title-page was as follows:—

> The | Queen of the Air: | being | A Study of the Greek Myths | of Cloud and Storm. | By | John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Slade Professor of Fine Art. | New Edition. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1874. [*The Right of Translation is reserved.*]

Octavo, pp. xii. + 208. Preface, pp. v.–x.; Contents, p. xi.; Text, pp. 1–208. Imprint (at foot of the reverse of the title-page and at foot of the last page): "Watson & Hazell, Printers, London and Aylesbury."

Issued on January 14, 1875, in "Ruskin calf," lettered across the back: "Ruskin. | Works. | Vol. | IX. | The | Queen of | the Air." Price 18s. In July 1882 some copies were put up in mottled-grey boards, with white paper label on the back, which reads: "Ruskin. | Works. | Vol. IX. | Queen | of the | Air." Price 13s. (1000 copies.)

The text of this edition followed that of the original edition. (There were, however, a few misprints—*e.g.*, "possetsion" in § 71, line 10, and "sepaarting is" for "separating it" in § 83, line 13.)

Fourth, or Collected "Works," Revised Edition (1883).—The general title-page was the same, except for the alteration of date. The particular title-page was:—

> The | Queen of the Air: | being | A Study of the Greek Myths | of | Cloud and Storm. | By | John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Slade Professor of Fine Art, Oxford. | Revised Edition. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, | Orpington, Kent. | 1883. | [*All rights reserved.*]

The collation follows the previous edition. The imprint reads: "Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Printers, London and Aylesbury." Issued in October 1883, in mottled-grey paper boards, with white paper label on the back.

(1000 copies.) Price as before; reduced in March 1893 to 15s. (calf) and 9s. 6d. (cloth).

The text of this edition was revised by the Rev. J. P. Faunthorpe; for the variations (which are unimportant), see below.

Collected "Works," Third Edition (1899).—In this edition the general title-page reads:—

> The | Works of John Ruskin | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow | of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | Volume IX. | The Queen of the Air. | George Allen, | Orpington and London. | 1899.

The particular title-page is also different, thus:—

> The | Queen of the Air: | Being | A Study of the Greek Myths | of | Cloud and Storm. | By | John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow of | Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | Third Edition. | George Allen, | Orpington and London. | 1899. | [*All rights reserved.*]

Octavo, pp. xiv. + 237. Imprint (at foot of the reverse of the title-page and at foot of p. 237): "Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co., Edinburgh and London." Contents (revised), p. vii.; Preface, pp. ix.–xiii.; Text, pp. 1–199; Index (as in the Small Editions in 1895 and afterwards), pp. 201–237.

Issued in May 1900. (250 copies.) Price 15s. (calf) and 9s. 6d. (cloth); reduced in July to 14s. 6d. (calf) and 7s. 6d. (cloth). This edition is still current. The text follows that of the "Revised Edition."

Small Edition (1887).—Of this edition, the fifth in order of publication, the title-page was as follows:—

> The Queen of the Air: | being | A Study of the Greek Myths | of | Cloud and Storm. | By | John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow | of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1887. | [*All rights reserved.*]

Crown 8vo, pp. xii. + 239. Imprint (at foot of the reverse of the title-page and at foot of the last page): "Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury." Preface, pp. v.–x.; Contents, p. xi.; Text, pp. 1–239.

Issued in June 1887 in chocolate and in dark green coloured cloth, lettered across the back: "Ruskin. | The | Queen | of the | Air." Price 5s. (2000 copies.)

The text follows that of the Revised Edition of 1883. (There are, however, some misprints—*e.g.*, "national" for "natural" in § 5, line 6.)

The small edition was *re-issued* in June 1890 (2000 copies) and June 1892 (2000); these issues were called "Third" and "Fifth" Editions (*i.e.*, third and fifth thousands of the book in the small form).

In November 1895 it was again *re-issued*. The book was now printed by Messrs. Ballantyne, and an *Index* (by Mr. Wedderburn) was added. (2000 copies.) This was called "Sixth Edition."

Re-issued in June 1898 ("Seventh Edition," 1000); October 1899 ("Fourteenth Thousand"); October 1900 ("Fifteenth Thousand"); December 1901 ("Sixteenth Thousand"); and January 1903 ("Seventeenth Thousand"). This last issue is still current; the price was reduced in January 1904 to 3s. 6d.

Pocket Edition (1904).—This edition, printed from the plates used for the editions last described, is uniform with other volumes in the same series (see Vol. XV. p. 6), the title-page being:—

The Queen of | the Air | By | John Ruskin | London: George Allen.

Issued in April 1904 (3000 copies). Price 2s. 6d. Reprinted in June 1904 (2000) and March 1905 (2000).

Unauthorised American Editions have been numerous, in various forms and at various prices from 50 cents upwards.

An *Authorised American* ("Brantwood") *Edition* was issued in 1891 by Charles E. Merrill & Co., New York, with an introduction by Charles Eliot Norton (pp. v.–xiii.).

A *German translation* has recently appeared, with the following title-page:—

Die Königin der Luft. | Studien | über die | griechische Sturm- und Wolkensage. | Von | John Ruskin. | ✠ | Aus dem Englischen übersetzt | von | Gertrud P. Wolff. | (*Coat of arms*) | Straßburg, | J. H. Ed. Heitz (Heitz und Mündel).

Crown 8vo, pp. viii. + 190. The translator adds one note (see § 27), and supplies a few of the references.

Reviews of the book appeared in the *Athenæum*, July 17, 1869; the *Spectator*, July 17, 1869; the *Saturday Review*, August 21, 1869; the *Westminster Review*, October 1869, vol. 36, N.S., pp. 663–666; and the *Guardian*, October 27, 1869. A critical study of *The Queen of the Air*, by Mr. R. Warwick Bond, appeared in *St. George*, January 1903, vol. vi. pp. 46–74.

Variæ Lectiones.—The text of the volume, as already stated, was only once revised—namely, in 1883. The following collation (unless otherwise stated) is therefore of the earlier editions with that of 1883. The more interesting variations are given under the text, and to these a reference only is here given.

The variations in the passages (§§ 127–132, 134) reprinted in *The Queen of the Air* from the *Notes on Employment* and on those (§§ 135–159) reprinted from *The Cestus of Aglaia* are elsewhere given; in the former case, in notes under the text in Vol. XVII. pp. 541–546; in the latter, in notes under the text of *Cestus* (above, pp. 72–81, 120–133), or in the bibliographical note (above, p. 46).

With these exceptions—and with the further exception of a few minor misprints (such as, § 71, "possetsion" for "possession"; § 83, "sepaarting"

for "separating"), different spellings, punctuation, italics, etc.—the following is a complete list of the various readings:—

Contents.—Eds. 1 and 2 had no list of contents. The "Works" editions of 1874 and 1883, and all the small editions, gave a list (which followed the Preface), enumerating the lectures by short titles—"Athena Chalinitis (Athena in the Heavens)," etc. In the edition of 1899 the list preceded the Preface and added the particulars of the lectures, as here (p. 289).

Lecture i.—Footnote to heading, the references "Cp. . . . 97" were added in 1883. "Corinthiaca" has hitherto been misprinted "Cainthiaca," and in the Greek the accents have been omitted. The Greek words, moreover, have hitherto been printed as if they came from Pausanias (thus, "Cainthiaca 4, beginning φλτρον ἱππειον, and Bellerophon's dream, Pind. *Ol.* 13, 97"); they are from Pindar. The necessary corrections have here been made.

§ 2, footnote added in 1883.

§ 11, line 11, eds. 1–3, "and chiefly of sins," altered by the reviser in 1883 to "and of sins, chiefly," but noted by Ruskin in his own copy to stand "as originally printed."

§ 19, line 2, eds. 1–3, "of Milton"; 1883, "of Milton's Lycidas"; the two footnotes were also added in 1883; lines 30, 31, 1883 altered "in leathern bags" to "in a leathern bag," and "like bags" into "like a bag"; and so, in the next line, 1883 altered "they are so" into "it is one," and "them" to "it."

§ 20, the note referring to Pindar was added in 1883.

§ 21, the note was added in 1883.

§ 26, in the note, "By" was changed to "Beside" in 1883; § 26, last lines, before 1883, the quotation from *Hamlet* was not set out in separate lines; see also p. 322 *n.*

§ 29, the note was added in 1883.

§ 36, line 13, "for" added in 1883; line 18, "are" altered to "be."

§ 38 (p. 336), line 14, "containing" was misprinted "containly" in the 1874 edition.

§ 39, the note was added in 1883; line 20, "p. 6" in all previous editions is here corrected to "pl. 6"; lines 20 and 50, "Le Normand" corrected to "Lenormant."

§ 42, in 1883 the note was added referring to the *Art Journal;* to which, in all subsequent editions, has hitherto been added "(Now included in the volumes of collected articles, published under the title of 'On the Old Road')."

§ 44, line 22, see p. 346 *n.*

§ 46, last line, "St." altered in 1883 to "S."

§ 48, line 11, see p. 349 *n.*

Lecture ii.—§ 52, line 6, "may" inserted in 1883.

§ 53, the note was added in 1883.

§ 62, lines 18, 21, 24, "may" was substituted in 1883 for "shall."

§ 68, line 35 and author's footnote, see p. 363 *n.*

§ 71, line 33, "St." altered to "S." (and so in § 105, line 23).

§ 72, line 13, "the" inserted before "symbol."

§ 76, the first note was added in 1883.

§ 91, last line, "around for ever" altered in 1883 to "for ever around."

§ 96, lines 12 and 13, "only" transferred in 1883 from before "reaches" to after "splendour."

§ 97, line 2, "are" altered to "be."

§ 111, line 7, "art" (in eds. 1–3) has been misprinted "heart" in all later editions.

Lecture iii.—§ 121, line 15, "was" altered to "were" in 1883.

§ 124, line 11, "for ever" after "destroyed" struck out in 1883.

§ 132, line 19, "only" and "live" transposed.

§§ 172, 174, 175, for the italics see p. 416 *n.*]

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PREFACE

My days and strength have lately been much broken; and I never more felt the insufficiency of both than in preparing for the press the following desultory memoranda on a most noble subject. But I leave them now as they stand, for no time nor labour would be enough to complete them to my contentment; and I believe that they contain suggestions which may be followed with safety, by persons who are beginning to take interest in the aspects of mythology, which only recent investigation has removed from the region of conjecture into that of rational inquiry.[1] I have some advantage, also, from my field work, in the interpretation of myths relating to natural phenomena: and I have had always near me, since we were at college together, a sure, and unweariedly kind, guide, in my friend Charles Newton, to whom we owe the finding of more treasure in mines of marble,[2] than, were it rightly estimated, all California could buy. I must not, however, permit the chance of his name being in any wise associated with my errors. Much of my work has been done obstinately in my own way; and he is never responsible for me, though he has often kept me right, or at least enabled me to advance in a right direction. Absolutely right no one can be in such

[1] [The date, 1869, should be remembered. Ruskin was thinking of the school of comparative mythology founded on philology (see a few lines lower down), not of the later method of anthropology: see the Introduction, p. lxvii.]

[2] [The reference is to Newton's own excavations and discoveries in Calymnos (1854, 1855); of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus (1856); and at Cnidus and Branchidae (see his *History of Discoveries at Halicarnassus*, etc., 1863). And, at a later date, to the numerous acquisitions which he made, and the excavations which he directed, as Keeper of the Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum. Ruskin gave £1000 to aid in such researches. For Ruskin's early friendship with Newton, see *Præterita*, i. § 225; ii. § 155.]

matters; nor does a day pass without convincing every honest student of antiquity of some partial error, and showing him better how to think, and where to look. But I knew that there was no hope of my being able to enter with advantage on the fields of history opened by the splendid investigation of recent philologists; though I could qualify myself, by attention and sympathy, to understand, here and there, a verse of Homer's or Hesiod's, as the simple people did for whom they sang.

Even while I correct these sheets for press, a lecture by Professor Tyndall has been put into my hands, which I ought to have heard last 16th of January,[1] but was hindered by mischance; and which, I now find, completes, in two important particulars, the evidence of an instinctive truth in ancient symbolism; showing, first, that the Greek conception of an ethereal element pervading space is justified by the closest reasoning of modern physicists;[2] and, secondly, that the blue of the sky, hitherto thought to be caused by watery vapour, is, indeed, reflected from the divided air itself; so that the bright blue of the eyes of Athena, and the deep blue of her ægis, prove to be accurate mythic expressions of natural phenomena which it is an uttermost triumph of recent science to have revealed.

Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine triumph more complete. To form, "within an experimental tube, a bit of more perfect sky than the sky itself!"[3] here is magic of the finest sort! singularly reversed from that of old time, which only asserted its competency to enclose in bottles elementary forces that were—not of the sky.

Let me, in thanking Professor Tyndall for the true wonder of this piece of work, ask his pardon, and that of all masters in physical science, for any words of mine, either

[1] [A lecture at the Royal Institution on Friday, January *15*, 1869, "On Chemical Rays, and the Light of the Sky," printed in the *Notices of Proceedings*, vol. 5, pp. 429–450. On the blue of the sky as reflected light, see especially p. 440.]

[2] [Compare § 10, below; p. 303.]

[3] [See pp. 435, 440, 445, of Tyndall's paper.]

in the following pages or elsewhere,[1] that may ever seem to fail in the respect due to their great powers of thought, or in the admiration due to the far scope of their discovery. But I will be judged by themselves, if I have not bitter reason to ask them to teach us more than yet they have taught.

This first day of May, 1869, I am writing where my work was begun thirty-five years ago, within sight of the snows of the higher Alps.[2] In that half of the permitted life of man, I have seen strange evil brought upon every scene that I best loved, or tried to make beloved by others.[3] The light which once flushed those pale summits with its rose at dawn, and purple at sunset, is now umbered and faint; the air which once inlaid the clefts of all their golden crags with azure is now defiled with languid coils of smoke, belched from worse than volcanic fires; their very glacier waves are ebbing, and their snows fading,[4] as if Hell had breathed on them; the waters that once sank at their feet into crystalline rest are now dimmed and foul, from deep to deep, and shore to shore. These are no careless words —they are accurately—horribly—true. I know what the Swiss lakes were; no pool of Alpine fountain at its source was clearer. This morning, on the Lake of Geneva, at half a mile from the beach, I could scarcely see my oar-blade a fathom deep.

The light, the air, the waters, all defiled! How of the earth itself? Take this one fact for type of honour done by the modern Swiss to the earth of his native land. There used to be a little rock at the end of the avenue by the port of Neuchâtel; there, the last marble of the foot of Jura, sloping to the blue water, and (at this time of year)

[1] [See, for instance, §§ 54, 57, 88, pp. 353, 355, 378. For later references to Tyndall in particular, see General Index.]

[2] [See *Præterita*, i. § 194: "The Col de la Faucille, on that day of 1835, opened to me in distinct vision the Holy Land of my future work and true home in this world."]

[3] [See, for instance, Vol. XVIII. pp. 22 *seq.*]

[4] [Compare *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series*, No. 169; and *Letters to Norton*, vol. ii. p. 107 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition).]

covered with bright pink tufts of Saponaria. I went, three days since, to gather a blossom at the place. The goodly native rock and its flowers were covered with the dust and refuse of the town; but, in the middle of the avenue, was a newly-constructed artificial rockery, with a fountain twisted through a spinning spout, and an inscription on one of its loose-tumbled stones,—

"Aux Botanistes,
Le club Jurassique."

Ah, masters of modern science, give me back my Athena out of your vials, and seal, if it may be, once more, Asmodeus therein.[1] You have divided the elements, and united them; enslaved them upon the earth, and discerned them in the stars. Teach us, now, but this of them, which is all that man need know,—that the Air is given to him for his life; and the Rain to his thirst, and for his baptism; and the Fire for warmth; and the Sun for sight; and the Earth for his meat—and his Rest.

VEVAY, *May* 1, 1869.

[1] [For Asmodeus, the evil spirit of destruction, see the Book of Tobit, *Paradise Lost* (iv. 168), and Le Sage's *Asmodeus; or, The Devil on Two Sticks* (*Le Diable Boiteux*); to which latter work reference is here made. "I have been for the last six months enclosed in one of these phials," says Asmodeus in announcing himself, while at the end he says, "The magician who kept me prisoned in my bottle has discovered that I am absent without leave, and prepares e'en now to call me back to his laboratory."]

THE QUEEN OF THE AIR

I

ATHENA CHALINITIS*

(Athena in the Heavens)

Lecture on the Greek Myths of Storm, given (partly) in University College, London, March 9th, 1869

1. I WILL not ask your pardon for endeavouring to interest you in the subject of Greek Mythology; but I must ask your permission to approach it in a temper differing from that in which it is frequently treated.[1] We cannot justly interpret the religion of any people, unless we are prepared to admit that we ourselves, as well as they, are liable to error in matters of faith; and that the convictions of others, however singular, may in some points have been well founded, while our own, however reasonable, may in some particulars be mistaken. You must forgive me, therefore, for not always distinctively calling the creeds of the past, "superstition," and the creeds of the present day, "religion"; as

* "Athena the Restrainer." The name is given to her as having helped Bellerophon to bridle Pegasus, the flying cloud. *Cp.* Pausanias, *Corinthiaca* 4, and Bellerophon's dream,[2] beginning *φίλτρον ἵππειον*, Pind. *Ol.* 13, 97.

[1] [See the *Art of England*, § 43, for "the supercilious theory" that "mythology is a temporary form of human folly."]

[2] [The reference to Pausanias, etc., was added in 1883; the exact reference is ii. 4, 1: "Not far from the tomb of Medea's children is a sanctuary of Athena the Bridler. For they say that Athena above all the gods helped Bellerophon," etc. The passage in Pindar tells how Bellerophon, when he sought to bridle Pegasus, suffered many things, until Athena visited him in a dream and said, "Come, take this charm over horses (*φίλτρον ἵππειον*)," etc. For Pegasus, as the flying cloud, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 185).]

well as for assuming that a faith now confessed may sometimes be superficial, and that a faith long forgotten may once have been sincere. It is the task of the Divine to condemn the errors of antiquity, and of the Philologist to account for them: I will only pray you to read, with patience and human sympathy, the thoughts of men who lived without blame in a darkness they could not dispel; and to remember that, whatever charge of folly may justly attach to the saying,—"There is no God,"[1] the folly is prouder, deeper, and less pardonable, in saying, "There is no God but for me."[2]

2. A myth, in its simplest definition, is a story with a meaning attached to it, other than it seems to have at first;[3] and the fact that it has such a meaning is generally marked by some of its circumstances being extraordinary, or, in the common use of the word, unnatural. Thus, if I tell you that Hercules killed a water-serpent in the lake of Lerna,[4] and if I mean, and you understand, nothing more than that fact, the story, whether true or false, is not a myth. But if by telling you this, I mean that Hercules purified the stagnation of many streams from deadly miasmata, my story, however simple, is a true myth; only, as, if I left it in that simplicity, you would probably look for nothing beyond, it will be wise in me to surprise your attention by adding some singular circumstance; for instance, that the water-snake had several heads, which revived as fast as they were killed, and which poisoned even the foot that trode upon them as they slept. And in proportion to the fulness of intended meaning I shall probably multiply and refine upon these improbabilities; as, suppose, if, instead of desiring only to tell you that Hercules purified a marsh, I wished you to understand that he contended with the venom and vapour of envy and evil ambition, whether

[1] [Psalms liii. 1.]

[2] [Compare Ruskin's note of 1883 in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 330).]

[3] [For the way in which "all great myths are founded, partly on physical, partly on moral fact," see *Proserpina*, ii. ch. i. § 45.]

[4] [See below, § 4.]

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And it is very necessary ~~of the greatest importance~~ in reading traditions of this kind - to ~~consider~~ ~~refle~~ determine first of all whether you are listening to a simple person, who is telling you what at all events he believes to be true, and or may even possibly have ~~actually~~ been so; true to some extent - or to a reserved philosopher who is hiding a theory of the universe under ~~in~~ the ~~heart of~~ ~~events~~ grotesque of a fairytale. It is in general more likely that the first supposition should be the true one ~~case than the~~ ~~lasts~~ and - simple and ~~faithful~~ credulous persons are fortunately more common than philosophers. and it is of the highest importance that when you receive their innocent testimony, you should take it as it was meant; and not efface under the graceful or vapid explanation which your ~~our~~ cultivated ingenuity may suggest - either the ~~[illegible]~~ evidence this story it may ~~be~~ contain - such as it is worth - of an extraordinary fact having taken place. or the unquestionable light which it will cast upon the character of the people by whom it ~~was~~ is so frankly believed.

4

A PAGE OF THE MS. OF "THE QUEEN OF THE AIR" (§ 3)

in other men's souls or in his own, and choked *that* malaria only by supreme toil—I might tell you that this serpent was formed by the Goddess whose pride was in the trial of Hercules; and that its place of abode was by a palm* tree; and that for every head of it that was cut off, two rose up with renewed life; and that the hero found at last he could not kill the creature at all by cutting its heads off or crushing them; but only by burning them down; and that the midmost of them could not be killed even that way, but had to be buried alive. Only, in proportion as I mean more I shall certainly appear more absurd in my statement,[1] and at last, when I get unendurably significant, all practical persons will agree that I was talking mere nonsense from the beginning, and never meant anything at all.

8. It is just possible, however, also, that the story-teller may all along have meant nothing but what he said; and that, incredible as the events may appear, he himself literally believed—and expected you also to believe—all this about Hercules, without any latent moral or history whatever. And it is very necessary, in reading traditions of this kind, to determine, first of all, whether you are listening to a simple person, who is relating what, at all events, he believes to be true (and may, therefore, possibly have been so to some extent), or to a reserved philosopher, who is veiling a theory of the universe under the grotesque of a fairy tale. It is, in general, more likely that the first supposition should be the right one:—simple and credulous persons are, perhaps fortunately, more common than philosophers: and it is of the highest importance that you should take their innocent testimony as it was meant, and not efface, under the graceful explanation which your cultivated ingenuity

* *Plane* in Pausanias, vol. i. 371—with Pisander of Camirus for author of legend.[2] [1883.]

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 71.]
[2] [Pausanias, ii. 37, 4.]

may suggest, either the evidence their story may contain (such as it is worth) of an extraordinary event having really taken place, or the unquestionable light which it will cast upon the character of the person by whom it was frankly believed. And to deal with Greek religion honestly, you must at once understand that this literal belief was, in the mind of the general people, as deeply rooted as ours in the legends of our own sacred book; and that a basis of unmiraculous event was as little suspected, and an explanatory symbolism as rarely traced, by them, as by us.

You must, therefore, observe that I deeply degrade the position which such a myth as that just referred to occupied in the Greek mind, by comparing it (for fear of offending you) to our story of St. George and the Dragon. Still, the analogy is perfect in minor respects; and though it fails to give you any notion of the vitally religious earnestness of the Greek faith, it will exactly illustrate the manner in which faith laid hold of its objects.

4. This story of Hercules and the Hydra, then, was to the general Greek mind, in its best days, a tale about a real hero and a real monster. Not one in a thousand knew anything of the way in which the story had arisen, any more than the English peasant generally is aware of the plebeian origin of St. George;[1] or supposes that there were once alive in the world, with sharp teeth and claws, real, and very ugly, flying dragons. On the other hand, few persons traced any moral or symbolical meaning in the story, and the average Greek was as far from imagining any interpretation like that I have just given you, as an average Englishman is from seeing in St. George the Red Cross Knight of Spenser, or in the dragon the Spirit of Infidelity. But, for all that, there was a certain undercurrent of consciousness in all minds, that the figures meant

[1] [Ruskin had written in his copy here, "Note wanted." In *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 26, he disentangles the story of George, the bacon seller, from the true saint, who, on the other hand, was born of noble parents, though "husbandman by name": see *St. Mark's Rest*, §§ 214 *seq.*, where a further discussion of the legend of St. George is given (by Mr. James Reddie Anderson).]

more than they at first showed; and according to each man's own faculties of sentiment, he judged and read them; just as a Knight of the Garter reads more in the jewel on his collar than the George and Dragon of a public-house expresses to the host or to his customers. Thus, to the mean person the myth always meant little; to the noble person, much: and the greater their familiarity with it, the more contemptible it became to the one, and the more sacred to the other: until vulgar commentators explained it entirely away, while Virgil made it the crowning glory of his choral hymn to Hercules:

> "Around thee, powerless to infect thy soul,
> Rose, in his crested crown, the Lerna worm."
>
> "Non te rationis egentem
> Lernæus turbâ capitum circumstetit anguis."[1]

And although, in any special toil of the hero's life, the moral interpretation was rarely with definiteness attached to its event, yet in the whole course of the life, not only a symbolical meaning, but the warrant for the existence of a real spiritual power, was apprehended of all men. Hercules was no dead hero, to be remembered only as a victor over monsters of the past—harmless now, as slain. He was the perpetual type and mirror of heroism, and its present and living aid against every ravenous form of human trial and pain.

5. But, if we seek to know more than this, and to ascertain the manner in which the story first crystallized into its shape, we shall find ourselves led back generally to one or other of two sources—either to actual historical events, represented by the fancy under figures personifying them; or else to natural phenomena similarly endowed with life by the imaginative power, usually more or less under the influence of terror. The historical myths we must leave the masters of history to follow; they, and the events they record, being yet involved in great, though attractive and

[1] [*Æneid*, viii. 300. Ruskin quoted the lines on a fly-leaf, describing the drawings shown at his lecture on Snakes (1880), there, however, giving Dryden's translation (see the later volume containing *Deucalion*).]

penetrable, mystery. But the stars, and hills, and storms are with us now, as they were with others of old; and it only needs that we look at them with the earnestness of those childish eyes to understand the first words spoken of them by the children of men. And then, in all the most beautiful and enduring myths, we shall find, not only a literal story of a real person,—not only a parallel imagery of moral principle,—but an underlying worship of natural phenomena, out of which both have sprung, and in which both for ever remain rooted. Thus, from the real sun, rising and setting;—from the real atmosphere, calm in its dominion of unfading blue, and fierce in its descent of tempest,—the Greek forms, first, the idea of two entirely personal and corporeal gods, whose limbs are clothed in divine flesh, and whose brows are crowned with divine beauty; yet so real that the quiver rattles at their shoulder, and the chariot bends beneath their weight. And on the other hand, collaterally with these corporeal images, and never for one instant separated from them, he conceives also two omnipresent spiritual influences, of which one illuminates, as the sun, with a constant fire, whatever in humanity is skilful and wise; and the other, like the living air, breathes the calm of heavenly fortitude, and strength of righteous anger, into every human breast that is pure and brave.

6. Now, therefore, in nearly every myth of importance, and certainly in every one of those of which I shall speak to-night, you have to discern these three structural parts[1]—the root and the two branches:—the root, in physical existence, sun, or sky, or cloud, or sea; then the personal incarnation of that; becoming a trusted and companionable deity, with whom you may walk hand in hand, as a child with its brother or its sister; and, lastly, the moral significance of the image, which is in all the great myths eternally and beneficently true.

[1] [Compare *Ethics of the Dust*, § 111, Vol. XVIII. pp. 347–348; and *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 184 (Vol. XX.).]

7. The great myths; that is to say, myths made by great people. For the first plain fact about myth-making is one which has been most strangely lost sight of,—that you cannot make a myth unless you have something to make it of. You cannot tell a secret which you don't know. If the myth is about the sky, it must have been made by somebody who had looked at the sky. If the myth is about justice and fortitude, it must have been made by some one who knew what it was to be just or patient. According to the quantity of understanding in the person will be the quantity of significance in his fable; and the myth of a simple and ignorant race must necessarily mean little, because a simple and ignorant race have little to mean. So the great question in reading a story is always, not what wild hunter dreamed, or what childish race first dreaded it; but what wise man first perfectly told, and what strong people first perfectly lived by it. And the real meaning of any myth is that which it has at the noblest age of the nation among whom it is current.[1] The farther back you pierce, the less significance you will find, until you come to the first narrow thought, which, indeed, contains the germ of the accomplished tradition; but only as the seed contains the flower. As the intelligence and passion of the race develop, they cling to and nourish their beloved and sacred legend; leaf by leaf, it expands, under the touch of more pure affections, and more delicate imagination, until at last the perfect fable burgeons out into symmetry of milky stem, and honeyed bell.

8. But through whatever changes it may pass, remember that our right reading of it is wholly dependent on the materials we have in our own minds for an intelligent answering sympathy. If it first arose among a people who dwelt under stainless skies, and measured their journeys by ascending and declining stars, we certainly cannot read

[1] [Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 71: "a great myth can only be written in the central time of a nation's power."]

their story, if we have never seen anything above us in the day but smoke; nor anything round us in the night but candles. If the tale goes on to change clouds or planets into living creatures,—to invest them with fair forms—and inflame them with mighty passions, we can only understand the story of the human-hearted things, in so far as we ourselves take pleasure in the perfectness of visible form, or can sympathise, by an effort of imagination, with the strange people who had other loves than that of wealth, and other interests than those of commerce. And, lastly, if the myth complete itself to the fulfilled thoughts of the nation, by attributing to the gods, whom they have carved out of their fantasy, continual presence with their own souls; and their every effort for good is finally guided by the sense of the companionship, the praise, and the pure will of Immortals, we shall be able to follow them into this last circle of their faith only in the degree in which the better parts of our own beings have been also stirred by the aspects of nature, or strengthened by her laws. It may be easy to prove that the ascent of Apollo in his chariot signifies nothing but the rising of the sun. But what does the sunrise itself signify to us? If only languid return to frivolous amusement, or fruitless labour, it will, indeed, not be easy for us to conceive the power, over a Greek, of the name of Apollo. But if, for us also, as for the Greek, the sunrise means daily restoration to the sense of passionate gladness, and of perfect life—if it means the thrilling of new strength through every nerve,—the shedding over us of a better peace than the peace of night, in the power of the dawn,—and the purging of evil vision and fear by the baptism of its dew; if the sun itself is an influence, to us also, of spiritual good—and becomes thus in reality, not in imagination, to us also, a spiritual power,—we may then soon over-pass the narrow limit of conception which kept that power impersonal, and rise with the Greek to the thought of an angel who rejoiced as a strong man to run

his course, whose voice, calling to life and to labour, rang round the earth, and whose going forth was to the ends of heaven.[1]

9. The time, then, at which I shall take up for you, as well as I can decipher it, the tradition of the Gods of Greece, shall be near the beginning of its central and formed faith,—about 500 B.C.,—a faith of which the character is perfectly represented by Pindar and Æschylus, who are both of them out-spokenly religious, and entirely sincere men; while we may always look back to find the less developed thought of the preceding epoch given by Homer, in a more occult, subtle, half-instinctive and involuntary way.

10. Now, at that culminating period of the Greek religion we find, under one governing Lord of all things, four subordinate elemental forces, and four spiritual powers living in them, and commanding them. The elements are of course the well-known four of the ancient world—the earth, the waters, the fire, and the air; and the living powers of them are Demeter, the Latin Ceres; Poseidon, the Latin Neptune; Apollo, who has retained always his Greek name; and Athena, the Latin Minerva. Each of these is descended from, or changed from, more ancient, and therefore more mystic deities of the earth and heaven, and of a finer element of æther supposed to be beyond the heavens;* but at this time we find the four quite definite, both in their kingdoms and in their personalities. They are the rulers of the earth that we tread upon, and the air that we breathe; and are with us as closely, in their vivid humanity, as the dust that they animate, and the winds that they bridle. I shall briefly define for you the range of their separate dominions, and then follow, as far

* And by modern science now also asserted, and with probability argued, to exist.[2]

[1] [Psalms xix. 5, 6 (Prayer-book version).]
[2] [See the Preface; above, p. 292.]

as we have time, the most interesting of the legends which relate to the queen of the air.

11. The rule of the first spirit, Demeter, the earth mother, is over the earth, first, as the origin of all life—the dust from whence we were taken:[1] secondly, as the receiver of all things back at last into silence—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."[2] And, therefore, as the most tender image of this appearing and fading life, in the birth and fall of flowers,[3] her daughter Proserpine plays in the fields of Sicily, and thence is torn away into darkness, and becomes the Queen of Fate—not merely of death, but of the gloom which closes over and ends, not beauty only, but sin; and chiefly of sins, the sin against the life she gave: so that she is, in her highest power, Persephone, the avenger and purifier of blood,—"The voice of thy brother's blood cries to me *out of the ground*."[4] Then, side by side with this queen of the earth, we find a demigod of agriculture by the plough — the lord of grain, or of the thing ground by the mill. And it is a singular proof of the simplicity of Greek character at this noble time, that of all representations left to us of their deities by their art, few are so frequent, and none perhaps so beautiful, as the symbol of this spirit of agriculture.[5]

12. Then the dominant spirit of the element of water is Neptune, but subordinate to him are myriads of other water spirits, of whom Nereus is the chief, with Palæmon, and Leucothea, the "white lady" of the sea; and Thetis, and nymphs innumerable, who, like her, could "suffer a sea change,"[6] while the river deities had each independent power, according to the preciousness of their streams to the cities fed by them,—the "fountain Arethuse, and thou,

[1] [For another reference to Demeter in this sense, see *Munera Pulveris*, Vol. XVII. p. 201.]
[2] [Genesis iii. 19.]
[3] [On the myth of Proserpine, compare Vol. VII. p. 474.]
[4] [Genesis iv. 10.]
[5] [For a representation of Triptolemus in his chariot, see *Aratra Pentelici* (§ 68).]
[6] [*Tempest*, i. 2 (song).]

honoured flood, smooth sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds."[1] And, spiritually, this king of the waters is lord of the strength and daily flow of human life—he gives it material force and victory; which is the meaning of the dedication of the hair, as the sign of the strength of life, to the river of the native land.[2]

18. Demeter, then, over the earth, and its giving and receiving of life. Neptune over the waters, and the flow and force of life,—always among the Greeks typified by the horse, which was to them as a crested sea-wave, animated and bridled. Then the third element, fire, has set over it two powers: over earthly fire, the assistant of human labour, is set Hephæstus,[3] lord of all labour in which is the flush and the sweat of the brow; and over heavenly fire, the source of day, is set Apollo, the spirit of all kindling, purifying, and illuminating intellectual wisdom; each of these gods having also their subordinate or associated powers—servant, or sister, or companion muse.

14. Then, lastly, we come to the myth which is to be our subject of closer inquiry—the story of Athena and of the deities subordinate to her. This great goddess, the Neith of the Egyptians,[4] the Athena or Athenaia of the Greeks, and, with broken power, half usurped by Mars, the Minerva of the Latins, is, physically, the queen of the air; having supreme power both over its blessings of calm, and wrath of storm; and spiritually, she is the queen of the breath of man, first of the bodily breathing which is life to his blood, and strength to his arm in battle; and then of the mental breathing, or inspiration, which is his moral health and habitual wisdom; wisdom of conduct and of the heart, as opposed to the wisdom of imagination and

[1] [*Lycidas*, 85, 86.]

[2] [As by Achilles: see below, § 37, p. 333. In the Elgin Room at the British Museum there is a Votive Relief (No. 798) with two plaits of twisted hair dedicated to Poseidon; for references to like customs in other races, see Frazer's *Pausanias*, vol. iv. p. 393.]

[3] [See below, § 38, p. 334; and compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 12 (above, p. 65).]

[4] [See *Sesame and Lilies*, § 62, and *Ethics of the Dust* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 118, 364).]

the brain; moral, as distinct from intellectual; inspired, as distinct from illuminated.

15. By a singular, and fortunate, though I believe wholly accidental coincidence, the heart-virtue, of which she is the spirit, was separated by the ancients into four divisions, which have since obtained acceptance from all men as rightly discerned, and have received, as if from the quarters of the four winds of which Athena is the natural queen, the name of "Cardinal" virtues: namely, Prudence, (the right seeing, and foreseeing, of events through darkness); Justice, (the righteous bestowal of favour and of indignation); Fortitude, (patience under trial by pain); and Temperance, (patience under trial by pleasure). With respect to these four virtues, the attributes of Athena are all distinct. In her prudence, or sight in darkness, she is "Glaukopis," owl-eyed.* In her justice, which is the dominant virtue, she wears two robes, one of light and one of darkness; the robe of light, saffron colour, or the colour of the daybreak, falls to her feet, covering her wholly with favour and love,—the calm of the sky in blessing; it is embroidered along its edge with her victory over the giants,[1] (the troublous powers of the earth,) and the likeness of it was woven yearly by the Athenian maidens and carried to the temple of their own Athena,—not to the Parthenon, that was the temple of all the world's Athena,—but this they carried to the temple of their own only one,[2] who loved them, and stayed with them always. Then her robe of indignation is worn on her breast and left arm only, fringed with fatal serpents, and fastened with Gorgonian cold, turning men to stone; physically, the lightning and the hail of chastisement by storm. Then in her fortitude she wears

* There are many other meanings in the epithet; see, farther on, § 91, p. 379.

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 106.]
[2] [That is, to the temple of Athene Polias: see below, p. 334 *n.*]

Athena

(From a Statue from Herculaneum)

the crested and unstooping helmet;* and lastly, in her temperance, she is the queen of maidenhood — stainless as the air of heaven.

16. But all these virtues mass themselves in the Greek mind into the two main ones—of Justice, or noble passion, and Fortitude, or noble patience; and of these, the chief powers of Athena, the Greeks had divinely written for them, and for all men after them, two mighty songs,—one, of the Menis,† mens, passion, or zeal, of Athena, breathed into a mortal whose name is "Ache of heart," and whose short life is only the incarnate brooding and burst of storm; and the other is of the foresight and fortitude of Athena, maintained by her in the heart of a mortal whose name is given to him from a longer grief, Odysseus the full of sorrow, the much-enduring, and the long-suffering.[1]

17. The minor expressions by the Greeks in word, in symbol, and in religious service, of this faith, are so many and so beautiful, that I hope some day to gather at least a few of them into a separate body of evidence respecting the power of Athena, and its relations to the ethical conception of the Homeric poems, or rather, to their ethical nature; for they are not conceived didactically, but are didactic in their essence, as all good art is.[2] There is an increasing insensibility to this character, and even an open denial of it, among us, now, which is one of the most curious errors of modernism, — the peculiar and judicial blindness of an age which, having long practised art and poetry for the sake of pleasure only, has become incapable

* I am compelled, for clearness' sake, to mark only one meaning at a time. Athena's helmet is sometimes a mask—sometimes a sign of anger—sometimes of the highest light of æther: but I cannot speak of all this at once.

† This first word of the *Iliad*, Menis, afterwards passes into the Latin Mens; is the root of the Latin name for Athena, "Minerva," and so of the English "mind."

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[1] [For other remarks on the name Odysseus, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 273), where Ruskin preferred to take it as meaning "the angry."]

[2] [On this point compare § 108; below, p. 394.]

of reading their language when they were both didactic: and also having been itself accustomed to a professedly didactic teaching, which yet, for private interests, studiously avoids collision with every prevalent vice of its day (and especially with avarice), has become equally dead to the intensely ethical conceptions of a race which habitually divided all men into two broad classes of worthy or worthless;—good and good for nothing. And even the celebrated passage of Horace about the *Iliad*[1] is now misread or disbelieved, as if it was impossible that the *Iliad* could be instructive because it is not like a sermon. Horace does not say that it is like a sermon, and would have been still less likely to say so, if he ever had had the advantage of hearing a sermon. "I having been reading that story of Troy again" (thus he writes to a noble youth of Rome whom he cared for), "quietly at Præneste, while you have been busy at Rome; and truly I think that what is base and what is noble, and what useful and useless, may be better learned from that than from all Chrysippus' and Crantor's[2] talk put together."* Which is profoundly true, not of the *Iliad* only, but of all other great art whatsoever; for all pieces of such art are didactic in the purest way, indirectly and occultly, so that, first, you shall only be bettered by them if you are already hard at work in bettering yourself; and when you *are* bettered by them it shall be partly with a general acceptance of their influence, so constant and subtle that you shall be no more conscious of it than of the healthy digestion of food; and partly by a gift of unexpected truth, which you shall only find by slow mining for it;—which is withheld on purpose, and close-locked, that you may not get it till you have forged the key of it in a furnace of your own heating.

* Note, once for all, that unless when there is question about some particular expression, I never translate literally, but give the real force of what is said, as I best can, freely.

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[1] [*Epistles*, i. 2.]
[2] [See Vol. XVIII. p 159 *n.*, where the passage is cited.]

And this withholding of their meaning is continual, and confessed, in the great poets.[1] Thus Pindar says of himself: "There is many an arrow in my quiver, full of speech to the wise, but, for the many, they need interpreters."[2] And neither Pindar, nor Æschylus, nor Hesiod, nor Homer, nor any of the greater poets or teachers of any nation or time, ever spoke but with intentional reservation: nay, beyond this, there is often a meaning which they themselves cannot interpret,—which it may be for ages long after them to interpret,—in what they said, so far as it recorded true imaginative vision. For all the greatest myths have been seen, by the men who tell them, involuntarily and passively[3]—seen by them with as great distinctness (and in some respects, though not in all, under conditions as far beyond the control of their will) as a dream sent to any of us by night when we dream clearest; and it is this veracity of vision that could not be refused, and of moral that could not be foreseen, which in modern historical inquiry has been left wholly out of account: being indeed the thing which no merely historical investigator can understand, or even believe; for it belongs exclusively to the creative or artistic group of men, and can only be interpreted by those of their race, who themselves in some measure also see visions and dream dreams.[4]

So that you may obtain a more truthful idea of the nature of Greek religion and legend from the poems of Keats, and the nearly as beautiful, and, in general grasp of subject, far more powerful, recent work of Morris,[5] than from frigid scholarship, however extensive. Not that the poet's impressions or renderings of things are wholly true, but their truth is vital, not formal. They are like sketches

[1] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 12 (above, p. 63); and see Carlyle's comment on this passage in the Introduction, above, p. lxx.]

[2] [*Olympia*, ii. 83–86.]

[3] [On this involuntariness, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 115 and 116 n.]

[4] [Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 17.]

[5] [William Morris had published *The Life and Death of Jason* in 1867, and the first portion of *The Earthly Paradise* in 1868.]

from life by Reynolds or Gainsborough, which may be demonstrably inaccurate or imaginary in many traits, and indistinct in others, yet will be in the deepest sense like, and true; while the work of historical analysis is too often weak with loss, through the very labour of its miniature touches, or useless in clumsy and vapid veracity of externals, and complacent security of having done all that is required for the portrait, when it has measured the breadth of the forehead, and the length of the nose.

18. The first of requirements, then, for the right reading of myths, is the understanding of the nature of all true vision by noble persons;[1] namely, that it is founded on constant laws common to all human nature; that it perceives, however darkly, things which are for all ages true; —that we can only understand it so far as we have some perception of the same truth;—and that its fulness is developed and manifested more and more by the reverberation of it from minds of the same mirror-temper, in succeeding ages. You will understand Homer better by seeing his reflection in Dante, as you may trace new forms and softer colours in a hillside, redoubled by a lake.

I shall be able partly to show you, even to-night, how much, in the Homeric vision of Athena, has been made clearer by the advance of time, being thus essentially and eternally true; but I must in the outset indicate the relation to that central thought of the imagery of the inferior deities of storm.

19. And first I will take the myth of Æolus (the "sage Hippotades" of Milton's *Lycidas*[2]), as it is delivered pure by Homer from the early times.

Why do you suppose Milton calls him "sage"? One does not usually think of the winds as very thoughtful or

[1] [Compare *Proserpina*, ii. ch. i. § 45.]

[2] [Æolus, son of Hippotes. Line 96:—

"And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd promontory.
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings."]

deliberate powers. But hear Homer:[1] "Then we came to the Æolian island, and there dwelt Æolus Hippotades, dear to the deathless gods: there he dwelt in a floating island, and round it was a wall of brass that could not be broken; and the smooth rock of it ran up sheer. To whom twelve children were born in the sacred chamber—six daughters and six strong sons; and they dwell for ever with their beloved father, and their mother strict in duty; and with them are laid up a thousand benefits; and the misty house around them rings with fluting all the day long." * Now, you are to note first, in this description, the wall of brass and the sheer rock. You will find, throughout the fables of the tempest-group, that the brazen wall and precipice (occurring in another myth as the brazen tower of Danaë)[2] are always connected with the idea of the towering cloud lighted by the sun, here truly described as a floating island. Secondly, you hear that all treasures were laid up in them; therefore, you know this Æolus is lord of the beneficent winds ("he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries"[3]);

* Conf. Eurip. *Bacch.*, 144, 147. [1883.[4]]

[1] [*Odyssey*, x. 1–10.]

[2] [For which myth, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 184–185 *n.*).]

[3] [Psalms cxxxv. 7.]

[4] [Ruskin, in interpreting the passage from Homer as meant to be applicable in all details to the winds, translates differently from most other commentators, who take *ὀνείατα* to mean not "benefits" or "treasures," but "dainties." So, again, in the last line (*κνισσῆεν δέ τε δῶμα περιστεναχίζεται αὐλῃ*) Ruskin reads as just given, and takes the last word to mean "with the sound of fluting" (the whistling of the wind), and interprets *κνισσῆεν* in a meteorological sense as "misty." The alternative version reads *αὐλῇ* ("in the courtyard"), and interprets *κνισσῆεν*, in accordance with the culinary rendering of *ὀνείατα*, as "steaming"; thus Butcher and Lang translate, "And dainties innumerable lie ready to their hands. And the house is full of the savour of feasting, and the noise thereof rings round, yea in the courtyard, by day." See further on this passage, above; the Introduction, p. lxix. Professor Norton, in correspondence with Ruskin, seems to have questioned the interpretation in the text and preferred the usual rendering. Ruskin replied that meat smoke is precisely what would be carried away in a house of the winds: "the house being full of the smell of dinner is precisely the *Unwindiest* character you could have given it. . . . While the *Calm* cloud is high in heaven, the Wind cloud rises up from the earth, and is actually the Steam of it, under the beneficent cookery of the winds, which make it good for food: 'Thy Dwelling shall be of the Dew of Heaven, and of the *fatness* of the Earth'" (*Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. ii. p. 21, reprinted in a later volume of this edition). The reference to Euripides was inserted in 1883 from Ruskin's notes, and illustrates further what he had in his mind. In the lines of the *Bacchæ* the chorus is

and presently afterwards Homer calls him the "steward" of the winds,[1] the master of the storehouse of them. And this idea of gifts and preciousness in the winds of heaven is carried out in the well-known sequel of the fable:—Æolus gives them to Ulysses, all but one, bound in a leathern bag,[2] with a glittering cord of silver; and so like a bag of treasures that the sailors think it is one, and open it to see. And when Ulysses is thus driven back to Æolus, and prays him again to help him, note the deliberate words of the King's refusal,—"Did I not," he says, "send thee on thy way heartily, that thou mightest reach thy country, thy home, and whatever is dear to thee? It is not lawful for me again to send forth favourably on his journey a man hated by the happy gods."[3] This idea of the beneficence of Æolus remains to the latest times, though Virgil, by adopting the vulgar change of the cloud island into Lipari,* has lost it a little; but even when it is finally explained away by Diodorus, Æolus is still a kind-hearted monarch, who lived on the coast of Sorrento, invented the use of sails, and established a system of storm signals.[4]

20. Another beneficent storm-power, Boreas, occupies an important place in early legend, and a singularly principal one in art;[5] and I wish I could read to you a passage of

* Conf. *Æn.*, viii. 416. [1883.]

singing the mystic song of the worship of the god; and in lines 144–147 says, "and the plain flows with milk, flows with wine, flows with the nectar of bees, and there is a smoke as of Syrian incense." Compare Ruskin's note in the *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 183 (Vol. XX.), where he says that Semele (as the rain-cloud) is called Thyone (which word he connects with the idea of burnt-sacrifice, *θύω*), because "she rises as burnt incense expanding in the air."]

[1] [*ταμίην ἀνέμων*—*Odyssey*, x. 21.]

[2] [But it was only "the blustering winds," *βυκτάων ἀνέμων κέλευθα* (*Odyssey*, x. 20), that Æolus had tied up. "That is indeed an important mistake about the bag," wrote Ruskin to Professor Norton. "Of course these stories are all first fixed in my mind by my boy's reading of Pope—then I read in the Greek rapidly to hunt out the points I want to work on, and am always liable to miss an immaterial point. But it is strange that I hardly ever get anything stated without some grave mistake, however true in my main discoveries" (*Letters to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. ii. p. 20).]

[3] [*Odyssey*, x. 65, 66, 72, 73.]

[4] [See Diodorus Siculus, v. 7 *ad fin.*]

[5] [A very beautiful representation of this subject—a favourite one with Greek artists—may be seen on a bronze relief in the British Museum (No. 310); it is one of those discovered by Ruskin's friend, Newton (see his *Travels*, vol. i. p. 330).]

Plato[1] about the legend of Boreas and Oreithyia,* and the breeze and shade of the Ilissus—notwithstanding its severe reflection upon persons who waste their time on mythological studies; but I must go on at once to the fable with which you are all generally familiar,—that of the Harpies.

This is always connected with that of Boreas or the north wind, because the two sons of Boreas are enemies of the Harpies, and drive them away into frantic flight.† The myth in its first literal form means only the battle between the fair north wind and the foul south one: the two Harpies, "Storm-swift," and "Swiftfoot," are the sisters of the rainbow[2]—that is to say, they are the broken drifts of the showery south wind, and the clear north wind drives them back; but they quickly take a deeper and more malignant significance. You know the short, violent, spiral gusts that lift the dust before coming rain: the Harpies get identified first with these, and then with more violent whirlwinds, and so they are called "Harpies," "the Snatchers," and are thought of as entirely destructive; their manner of destroying being twofold—by snatching away, and by defiling and polluting. This is a month[3] in which you may really see a small Harpy at her work almost whenever you choose. The first time that there is threatening of rain after two or three days of fine weather, leave your window

* Translated by Max Müller in the opening of his essay on "Comparative Mythology." (*Chips from a German Workshop;* vol. ii.)

† Zetes and Calaïs, Pind. *Pyth.*, 4, 324, have *rough purple* (*i.e.*, fiery) wings. [1883.4]

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[1] [See *Phædrus*, 229 B. and C.]

[2] [See Hesiod: *Theogony*, 265–269: "And Thaumas wedded Electra, daughter of deep-flowing Ocean; she bare rapid Iris, and the fair-tressed Harpies, Aello and Ocypete, who accompany the wind-blasts and birds, with swift wings, for they fly high above the earth." *Aello*, "storm-swift" (ἀελλα, a stormy wind); *Ocypete*, "swift-flying." But already in Homer the "more malignant significance" is present: see *Odyssey*, i. 241—"but now the harpies (spirits of the storm) have swept him away inglorious"—and compare *ibid.*, xx. 66, 77.]

[3] [The lecture was delivered on March 9.]

[4] ["Willingly and with glad heart their father Boreas, king of winds, harnessed Zetes and Calaïs, men both with purple wings shooting from their backs." For the meaning of "purple," see below, p. 330.]

well open to the street, and some books or papers on the table; and if you do not, in a little while, know what the Harpies mean; and how they snatch, and how they defile, I'll give up my Greek myths.

21. That is the physical meaning. It is now easy to find the mental one. You must all have felt the expression of ignoble anger in those fitful gusts of sudden storm. There is a sense of provocation and apparent bitterness of purpose in their thin and senseless fury, wholly different from the noble anger of the greater tempests. Also, they seem useless and unnatural, and the Greek thinks of them always as vile in malice, and opposed, therefore, to the sons of Boreas, who are kindly winds, that fill sails, and wave harvests,—full of bracing health and happy impulses.* From this lower and merely malicious temper, the Harpies rise into a greater terror, always associated with their whirling motion, which is indeed indicative of the most destructive winds: and they are thus related to the nobler tempests, as Charybdis to the sea;[1] they are devouring and desolating, merciless, making all things disappear that come in their grasp: and so, spiritually, they are the gusts of vexatious, fretful, lawless passion, vain and over-shadowing, discontented and lamenting, meagre and insane,—spirits of wasted energy, and wandering disease, and unappeased famine, and unsatisfied hope. So you have, on the one side, the winds of prosperity and health, on the other, of ruin and sickness. Understand that, once, deeply—any who have ever known the weariness of vain desires; the pitiful, unconquerable, coiling and recoiling, and self-involved returns of some sickening famine and thirst of heart:—and you will know

* Conf. Refreshment of Sarpedon, *Il.* v. 697. [1883.[2]]

[1] [For Charybdis, see *Munera Pulveris*, § 86 (Vol. XVII. p. 208).]

[2] [In Pope's version:—

"The fainting soul stood ready winged for flight,
And o'er his eyeballs swam the shades of night;
But Boreas rising fresh, with gentle breath,
Recalled his spirit from the gates of death."]

what was in the sound of the Harpy Celæno's shriek from her rock;[1] and why, in the seventh circle of the *Inferno*, the Harpies make their nests in the warped branches of the trees that are the souls of suicides.[2]

22. Now you must always be prepared to read Greek legends as you trace threads through figures on a silken damask: the same thread runs through the web, but it makes part of different figures. Joined with other colours you hardly recognize it, and in different lights it is dark or light. Thus the Greek fables blend and cross curiously in different directions, till they knit themselves into an arabesque where sometimes you cannot tell black from purple, nor blue from emerald—they being all the truer for this, because the truths of emotion they represent are interwoven in the same way, but all the more difficult to read, and to explain in any order. Thus the Harpies, as they represent vain desire, are connected with the Sirens, who are the spirits of constant desire: so that it is difficult sometimes in early art to know which are meant, both being represented alike as birds with women's heads: only the Sirens are the great constant desires—the infinite sicknesses of heart—which, rightly placed, give life, and, wrongly placed, waste it away; so that there are two groups of Sirens, one noble and saving, as the other is fatal. But there are no animating or saving Harpies; their nature is always vexing and full of weariness, and thus they are curiously connected with the whole group of legends about Tantalus.

23. We all know what it is to be tantalized; but we do not often think of asking what Tantalus was tantalized for—what he had done, to be for ever kept hungry in sight of food? Well; he had not been condemned to this merely for being a glutton. By Dante the same punishment is assigned to simple gluttony, to purge it away;[3]—

[1] [*Æneid*, iii. 245 *seq.*]
[2] [*Inferno*, xiii. 10, 94–108: compare Vol. V. p. 273; Vol. XVII. p. 215; and Vol. XVIII. p. 367 *n.*]
[3] [*Purgatorio*, xxii.–xxiv.]

but the sins of Tantalus were of a much wider and more mysterious kind. There are four great sins attributed to him[1]—one, stealing the food of the Gods to give it to men: another, sacrificing his son to feed the Gods themselves (it may remind you for a moment of what I was telling you[2] of the earthly character of Demeter, that, while the other Gods all refuse, she, dreaming about her lost daughter, eats part of the shoulder of Pelops before she knows what she is doing); another sin is, telling the secrets of the Gods; and only the fourth—stealing the golden dog of Pandareos—is connected with gluttony. The special sense of this myth is marked by Pandareos receiving the happy privilege of never being troubled with indigestion;[3] the dog, in general, however, mythically represents all utterly senseless and carnal desires, mainly that of gluttony; and in the mythic sense of Hades—that is to say, so far as it represents spiritual ruin in this life, and not a literal hell—the dog Cerberus is its gate-keeper—with this special marking of his character of sensual passion, that he fawns on all those who descend, but rages against all who would return (the Virgilian "facilis descensus"[4] being a later recognition of this mythic character of Hades):

[1] [Of the legends of Tantalus here mentioned, the first is to be found in Pindar, *Olymp.* i. 59–63 ("this hopeless life of misery he endureth, for stealing from the immortals and giving to his fellows at a feast the nectar and ambrosia, whereby the gods had made him incorruptible"). The second legend—which is discarded by Pindar (*ibid.*, 52), "to me it is impossible to call one of the blessed gods cannibal"—is that Tantalus, when entertaining the gods, placed before them at the feast the limbs of his son Pelops, who (when restored to life by Zeus) was given an ivory shoulder in place of the one eaten unwittingly by Demeter. For other allusions to this story, and to Pindar's rejection of it, see *Lectures on Art*, § 151, and *Arrows of the Chace*, § 86. The third legend—of Tantalus telling τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ παρὰ τοῖς ἀθανάτοις ἀπόρρητα—is mentioned by Diodorus Siculus (iv. 74) and Hyginus (82). The story of Tantalus stealing the dog is told by the scholiasts on Homer (*Odyssey*, xx. 66) and Pindar (*Ol.* i. 97). Zeus had a golden dog which guarded his sanctuary in Crete. Pandareos of Miletus stole it, but fearing to take it home with him, entrusted it to the keeping of Tantalus. Zeus sent Hermes to recover it, when Tantalus swore a great oath that he knew nothing about it. (For the subsequent punishment of Pandareos, see p. 318 *n.*) For a description of the punishment of Tantalus, see *Odyssey*, x. 581 *seq.*]

[2] [See § 11, p. 304.]

[3] [This story is mentioned in Smith's *Dictionary of Mythology*, on the authority of Antoninus Liberalis (11), a writer of the second century A.D.]

[4] [*Æneid*, vi. 126.]

the last labour of Hercules is the dragging him up to the light; and in some sort, he represents the voracity or devouring of Hades itself; and the mediæval representation of the mouth of hell perpetuates the same thought. Then, also, the power of evil passion is partly associated with the red and scorching light of Sirius, as opposed to the pure light of the sun:—he is the dog-star of ruin; and hence the continual Homeric dwelling upon him, and comparison of the flame of anger to his swarthy light;[1] only, in his scorching, it is thirst, not hunger, over which he rules physically; so that the fable of Icarius, his first master, corresponds, among the Greeks, to the legend of the drunkenness of Noah.[2]

The story of Actæon, the raging death of Hecuba, and the tradition of the white dog which ate part of Hercules' first sacrifice, and so gave name to the Cynosarges,[3] are all various phases of the same thought—the Greek notion of the dog being throughout confused between its serviceable fidelity, its watchfulness, its foul voracity, shamelessness, and deadly madness,[4] while with the curious reversal or recoil of the meaning which attaches itself to nearly every great myth—and which we shall presently see notably exemplified in the relations of the serpent to Athena,—the dog becomes in philosophy a type of severity and abstinence.

[1] [See, for instance, *Iliad*, xxii. 25 *seq.*]

[2] [For the legend of Icarius, who introduced Dionysus into Attica, see Apollodorus, iii. 14: he gave unmixed wine to the shepherds, who, thinking they had been drugged, killed Icarius and buried him. His daughter, Erigone, searched for him with the help of his dog, Mæra, and when she found the body, killed herself. Hyginus (130) adds that the dog Mæra became Canicula, the dog-star.]

[3] [For Cynosarges—a sanctuary and gymnasium outside the city walls of Athens—see the note in Frazer's *Pausanias*, vol. ii. p. 193. The story, given in old dictionaries (see Frazer's references), is that one Diomus was sacrificing to Hercules when a white dog snatched up the victim and ran away with it. Thereupon Diomus was bidden by the oracle to find the place where the dog had deposited the victim, and there to build an altar to Hercules; hence the sanctuary was called Cynosarges (white dog). In later days the Cynics lectured at the place, and according to some interpreters derived their name from it.]

[4] [With the discussion here of the mythology of the dog should be compared *Eagle's Nest*, § 151, where Ruskin discusses "a succession of animal types used in art either to symbolize, or contrast with, dignity in human persons."]

24. It would carry us too far aside were I to tell you the story of Pandareos' dog—or rather, of Jupiter's dog, for Pandareos was its guardian only;[1] all that bears on our present purpose is that the guardian of this golden dog had three daughters, one of whom was subject to the power of the Sirens, and is turned into the nightingale; and the other two were subject to the power of the Harpies, and this was what happened to them.[2] They were very beautiful, and they were beloved by the gods in their youth, and all the great goddesses were anxious to bring them up rightly. Of all types of young ladies' education, there is nothing so splendid as that of the younger daughters of Pandareos. They have literally the four greatest goddesses for their governesses. Athena teaches them domestic accomplishments; how to weave, and sew, and the like; Artemis teaches them to hold themselves up straight; Hera, how to behave proudly and oppressively to company; and Aphrodite—delightful governess—feeds them with cakes and honey all day long. All goes well, until just the time when they are going to be brought out; then there is a great dispute whom they are to marry, and in the midst of it they are carried off by the Harpies, given by them to be slaves to the Furies, and never seen more. But of course there is nothing in Greek myths; and one never heard of such things as vain desires, and empty hopes, and clouded passions, defiling and snatching away the souls of maidens, in a London season.

I have no time to trace for you any more harpy legends, though they are full of the most curious interest;

[1] [See above, p. 316.]

[2] [The story is told by Homer (*Odyssey*, xx. 66–78) and by Pausanias (x. 30, 1, 2, in describing a picture of the subject by Polygnotus). Zeus, in punishment for the crime of Pandareos, had killed both him and his wife. It is a further illustration of what Ruskin has been saying about the dog that, according to one of the scholiasts, "Zeus inflicted on the maidens a disease, which is called 'dog'"—*i.e.*, perhaps, the form of insanity which consists in the patient believing himself to be an animal and behaving accordingly (see Frazer's *Pausanias*, vol. v. pp. 381–383).]

but I may confirm for you my interpretation of this one, and prove its importance in the Greek mind, by noting that Polygnotus painted these maidens, in his great religious series of paintings at Delphi, crowned with flowers, and playing at dice;[1] and that Penelope remembers them in her last fit of despair, just before the return of Ulysses; and prays bitterly that she may be snatched away at once into nothingness by the Harpies, like Pandareos' daughters, rather than be tormented longer by her deferred hope, and anguish of disappointed love.[2]

25. I have hitherto spoken only of deities of the winds. We pass now to a far more important group, the Deities of Cloud. Both of these are subordinate to the ruling power of the air, as the demigods of the fountains and minor seas are to the great deep: but as the cloud-firmament detaches itself more from the air, and has a wider range of ministry than the minor streams and sea, the highest cloud deity, Hermes,[3] has a rank more equal with Athena than Nereus or Proteus with Neptune; and there is greater difficulty in tracing his character, because his physical dominion over the clouds can, of course, be asserted only where clouds are; and, therefore, scarcely at all in Egypt:* so that the changes which Hermes undergoes in becoming a Greek from an Egyptian and Phœnician god, are greater than in any other case of adopted tradition.

* I believe that the conclusions of recent scholarship are generally opposed to the Herodotean ideas of any direct acceptance by the Greeks of Egyptian Myths: and very certainly, Greek art is developed by giving the veracity and simplicity of real life to Eastern savage grotesque; and not by softening the severity of pure Egyptian designs. But it is of no consequence whether one conception was, or was not, in this case, derived from the other; my object is only to mark the essential differences between them.

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[1] [See, again, Pausanias, x. 30, 2.]
[2] [See, again, *Odyssey*, xx. 66 *seq.*]
[3] [For other references to Hermes, as the cloud deity, see *Lectures on Art*, §§ 153, 156; *Aratra Pentelici*, § 160; and the "Tortoise of Ægina," § 20 (Vol. XX.).]

In Egypt Hermes is a deity of historical record,[1] and a conductor of the dead to judgment; the Greeks take away much of this historical function, assigning it to the Muses; but, in investing him with the physical power over clouds, they give him that which the Muses disdain—the power of concealment, and of theft. The snatching away by the Harpies is with brute force; but the snatching away by the clouds is connected with the thought of hiding, and of making things seem to be what they are not; so that Hermes is the god of lying, as he is of mist; and yet, with this ignoble function of making things vanish and disappear, is connected the remnant of his grand Egyptian authority of leading away souls in the cloud of death (the actual dimness of sight caused by mortal wounds physically suggesting the darkness and descent of clouds, and continually being so described in the *Iliad*);[2] while the sense of the need of guidance on the untrodden road follows necessarily. You cannot but remember how this thought of cloud guidance, and cloud receiving of souls at death, has been elsewhere ratified.[3]

26. Without following that higher clue, I will pass to the lovely group of myths connected with the birth of Hermes on the Greek mountains. You know that the valley of Sparta is one of the noblest mountain ravines in the world,[4] and that the western flank of it is formed by an unbroken chain of crags, forty miles long, rising, opposite

[1] [For Thoth, as the Egyptian Hermes, see *Ethics of the Dust* (Vol. XVIII. p. 364). "The principal office of this god was to record the final judgment of the dead in a future state, in the terrible hall of the two Truths" (Arundale's *Gallery of Antiquities*, p. 27).]

[2] [As, for instance, in xiii. 575 and xvi. 350 ("and the black cloud of death veiled him").]

[3] [Acts i. 9: "and a cloud received Him out of their sight."]

[4] [Ruskin, who had not been in Greece, is here writing from the descriptions of travellers—perhaps from Dodwell's: "All the plains and all the mountains that I have seen are surpassed in the variety of their combinations, and in the beauty of their appearance, by the plain of Lacedæmon and Mount Taygetus. . . . From the western side of the plain rise the grand and abrupt precipices of Taygetus, which is broken into many summits. The bases also of the mountain are formed by several projections distinct from each other, which branch into the plain, and hence produce the rich assemblage and luxuriant multiplicity of lines, and tints,

Sparta, to a height of 8,000 feet, and known as the chain of Taygetus. Now the nymph from whom that mountain ridge is named, was the mother of Lacedæmon; therefore, the mythic ancestress of the Spartan race. She is the nymph Taygeta, and one of the seven stars of spring; one of those Pleiades of whom is the question to Job,—"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?"[1] "The sweet influences of Pleiades," of the stars of spring,—nowhere sweeter than among the pineclad slopes of the hills of Sparta and Arcadia, when the snows of their higher summits, beneath the sunshine of April, fell into fountains, and rose into clouds; and in every ravine was a newly-awakened voice of waters,—soft increase of whisper among its sacred stones: and on every crag its forming and fading veil of radiant cloud; temple above temple, of the divine marble that no tool can pollute, nor ruin undermine. And, therefore, beyond this central valley, this great Greek vase of Arcadia, on the "*hollow*" mountain, Cyllene,[2] or "pregnant" mountain, called also "cold," because there the vapours rest,* and born of the eldest of those stars of spring, that Maia, from whom your own month of May has its name, bringing to you, in the green of her garlands and

* On the altar of Hermes on its summit, as on that of the Lacinian Hera, no wind ever stirred the ashes. Beside those altars, the Gods of Heaven were appeased: and all their storms at rest.

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and shades, which render it the finest locality in Greece" (*Tour through Greece*, vol. ii. pp. 408–410). For Taygete, the mother of Lacedæmon, see Pausanias, iii. 1, 2; she was changed after her death into one of the Pleiades (Hyginus, 155, 192; and see Virgil, *Georgics*, iv. 232).]

[1] [Job xxxviii. 31: compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 28. And for the Pleiades, see below, § 38, pp. 335–336.]

[2] [The name, no doubt, has to do with κοῖλος, hollow (though Pausanias gives a different derivation), and Ruskin goes on to suggest yet another, connecting the word κυλλήνη with κύω (to be pregnant). "Called cold" by Virgil (*Æneid*, viii. 139):—

"Vobis Mercurius pater est, quem candida Maia
Cyllenæ gelido conceptum vertice fudit."

The altar of Hermes on its summit is mentioned by Pausanias (viii. 17, 1); for the story of the wind never stirring the ashes, see the references given in Smith's *Dictionary of Mythology*; with which Ruskin compares the passage in Livy (xxiv. 3), of the altar of the Lacinian Hera, "fama est aram esse in vestibulo templi cujus cinerem nullo unquam moveri vento."]

the white of her hawthorn, the unrecognized symbols of the pastures and the wreathed snows of Arcadia, where long ago she was queen of stars: there—first cradled and wrapt in swaddling-clothes; then raised, in a moment of surprise, into his wandering power—is born the shepherd of the clouds,[1] winged-footed and deceiving,—blinding the eyes of Argus, —escaping from the grasp of Apollo—restless messenger between the highest[2] sky and topmost earth—

> "the herald Mercury,
> New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill."[3]

27. Now, it will be wholly impossible, at present, to trace for you any of the minor Greek expressions of this thought, except only that Mercury, as the cloud shepherd, is especially called Eriophoros, the wool-bearer.[4] You will recollect the name from the common woolly rush "eriophorum," which has a cloud of silky seed; and note also that he wears distinctively the flat cap, *petasos*, named from a word meaning to expand;[5] which shaded from the sun, and is worn on journeys. You have the epithet of mountains "cloud-capped" as an established form with every poet,[6] and the Mont Pilate of Lucerne is named from a Latin word signifying specially a *woollen* cap; but Mercury has, besides, a general Homeric epithet, curiously and intensely concentrated in meaning, "the profitable or serviceable by

[1] [See the opening lines of the Homeric Hymn: "Of Hermes sing, O Muse, the son of Zeus and Maia, Lord of Cyllene, and Arcadia rich in sheep," etc.]

[2] ["Highest" in eds. 1–3; altered to "lowest" in 1883, and so in subsequent editions; but in his own copy Ruskin cancelled the alteration (which was made by Mr. Faunthorpe).]

[3] [*Hamlet*, iii. 4, 58.]

[4] [This is a puzzling statement, for no instance can be found of the application of this rare epithet to Hermes. It is conceivable that when referring to his notebooks Ruskin (with the point he is here making in his mind) misread κριοφόρος as ἐριοφόρος. (If he had written the word in English letters, *criophoros* might easily have been misread *eriophoros*.) The former epithet ("ram-bearing") is applied to Hermes in Pausanias (ix. 22, 1), and the type is familiar in art as that from which the early Christian representations of the Good Shepherd were copied. Ruskin uses the phrase "Hermes Eriophoros" again in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 160.]

[5] [*i.e.*, πετάννυμι—connected with Hermes in Athenæus, 537 F.]

[6] [The German translator (see above, p. 286) here cites Schiller's *William Tell*, i.: "Der Mythenstein zieht seine Haube an." For the derivation of Mont Pilate from *pileatus*, see Vol. VII. p. 164 and *n.*]

wool,"* that is to say, by shepherd wealth; hence, "pecuniarily,"[1] rich, or serviceable, and so he passes at last into a general mercantile deity; while yet the cloud sense of the wool is retained by Homer always, so that he gives him this epithet when it would otherwise have been quite meaningless, (in *Iliad*, xxiv. 440,) when he drives Priam's chariot, and breathes force into his horses, precisely as we shall find Athena drive Diomed:[2] and yet the serviceable and profitable sense, and something also of gentle and soothing character in the mere wool-softness, as used for dress, and religious rites, is retained also in the epithet, and thus the gentle and serviceable Hermes is opposed to the deceitful one.

28. In connection with this driving of Priam's chariot, remember that as Autolycus[3] is the son of Hermes the Deceiver, Myrtilus (the Auriga of the Stars) is the son of Hermes the Guide. The name Hermes itself means Impulse;[4] and he is especially the shepherd of the flocks of the sky, in driving, or guiding, or stealing them; and yet his great name, Argeiphontes,[5] not only—as in different passages of the olden poets—means "Shining White," which is said

* I am convinced that the ἐρι in ἐριούνιος is not intensitive; but retained from ἔριον:[6] but even if I am wrong in thinking this, the mistake is of no consequence with respect to the general force of the term as meaning the *profitableness* of Hermes. Athena's epithet of ἀγελεία has a parallel significance.[7]

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[1] [For the derivation of *pecunia* (wealth) from *pecus* (cattle), see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 53.]

[2] [See below, § 36, p. 332.]

[3] [See Vol. XVII. p. 39.]

[4] [So say some authorities, connecting the name with ὁρμή. But there are many other theories (see Preller-Robert, *Griechische Mythologie*, i. 386.]

[5] [The word occurs as epithet of Hermes some thirty times in Homer, but there is nothing to show from the context what it means. The first commentators took it to mean "Argus-Killer"—an interpretation which Aristarchus rejected because Homer did not appear to know the myth of Hermes slaying Argus by lulling his hundred eyes to sleep with the sound of his lyre. Hence, as an alternative, the interpretation "Shining White"; another suggestion is "Swift appearing" (see Leaf's note to *Iliad*, ii. 103).]

[6] [ἔριον = wool. The common explanation of the word (in ancient as in modern times) is ἐρι (intensitive) + ὀνίημι, "the helper." But, says Mr. Leaf, "in view of the pastoral character of Hermes, a derivation from ἔριον, *making wool to grow*, is equally possible" (note on *Iliad*, xx. 34).]

[7] [*Iliad*, ii. 269; iv. 128, etc. Ruskin derives the epithet from ἀγέλη, making it mean "guardian of herds," and not "driver of spoil" (λείαν ἄγουσα).]

of him as being himself the silver cloud lighted by the sun; but "Argus-Killer," the killer of brightness, which is said of him as he veils the sky, and especially the stars, which are the eyes of Argus; or, literally, eyes of brightness, which Juno, who is, with Jupiter, part of the type of highest heaven, keeps in her peacock's train. We know that this interpretation is right, from a passage in which Euripides describes the shield of Hippomedon,[1] which bore for its sign, "Argus the all-seeing, covered with eyes; open towards the rising of the stars, and closed towards their setting."

And thus Hermes becomes the spirit of the movement of the sky or firmament; not merely the fast flying of the transitory cloud, but the great motion of the heavens and stars themselves. Thus, in his highest power, he corresponds to the "primo mobile" of the later Italian philosophy,[2] and, in his simplest, is the guide of all mysterious and cloudy movement, and of all successful subtleties. Perhaps the prettiest minor recognition of his character is when, on the night foray of Ulysses and Diomed, Ulysses wears the helmet stolen by Autolycus the son of Hermes.[3]

29. The position in the Greek mind of Hermes as the Lord of cloud is, however, more mystic and ideal than that of any other deity, just on account of the constant and real presence of the cloud itself under different forms, giving rise to all kinds of minor fables. The play of the Greek imagination in this direction is so wide and complex, that I cannot even give you an outline of its range in my present limits. There is first a great series of storm-legends connected with the family of the historic Æolus, centralized

[1] [*Phœnissæ*, 116.]

[2] [The *primum mobile* was in the Ptolemaic system of astronomy the tenth sphere, supposed to revolve from east to west in twenty-four hours, carrying with it all the other spheres. Thus in Milton (*Paradise Lost*, iii. 481–483):—

> "They pass the planets seven, and pass the fixed,
> And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
> The trepidation talked, and that *first moved*."

See the explanation of the passage in David Masson's edition of Milton, vol. ii. pp. 37 *seq.*]

[3] [*Iliad*, x. 261 *seq.*]

by the story of Athamas, with his two wives "the Cloud" and the "White Goddess,"[1] ending in that of Phrixus and Helle, and of the golden fleece (which is only the cloud-burden of Hermes Eriophoros[2]). With this, there is the fate of Salmoneus,* and the destruction of Glaucus by his own horses;[3] all these minor myths of storm concentrating themselves darkly into the legend of Bellerophon and the Chimæra, in which there is an under story about the vain subduing of passion and treachery, and the end of life in fading melancholy,[4]—which, I hope, not many of you could understand even were I to show it you: (the merely physical meaning of the Chimæra is the cloud of volcanic lightning, connected wholly with earth-fire, but resembling the heavenly cloud in its height and its thunder). Finally, in the Æolic group, there is the legend of Sisyphus, which I mean to work out thoroughly by itself: its root is in the position of Corinth as ruling the isthmus and the two seas

* Θρασυμήδης Pind., *Pyth.*, 4, 254. Conf. Lucian in *Timon* [1883].[5]

[1] [Athamas, son of Æolus, married first Nephele; and then Ino, daughter of Cadmus, worshipped as a sea-goddess under the name Leucothea (*Odyssey*, v. 333). She was jealous of Phrixus and Helle, the children of Athamas by Nephele, and resolved to destroy them; but they escaped from her fury to Colchis, on a golden ram: for a passing reference to the legend, see *Crown of Wild Olive* (Vol. XVIII. p. 530), and compare *Lectures on Art*, § 152.]

[2] [See above, p. 322 *n.*]

[3] [The story of Glaucus, son of Sisyphus, destroyed by his own mares, is told by Hyginus (250), and referred to by Virgil (*Georgics*, ii. 267). For a passing reference to it, see *Art of England*, § 80.]

[4] [Here Ruskin rationalises the story of Bellerophon as told by the fabulists and poets. (For a passing reference to it, see *Lectures on Art*, § 151.) Bellerophon, after the murder of his brother, had fled to the court of Prœtus, King of Argos; and there he resisted the advances of Stenobœa, the king's wife. But she accused him to her husband, who sent him to his father-in-law, Jobates, King of Lycia, to be murdered treacherously. Jobates, not wishing to put him straight to death, imposed on Bellerophon many dangerous labours; amongst others, the slaying of the Chimæra. In vain did Bellerophon surmount them; for when he tried to escape to heaven on Pegasus, Zeus stung the horse and Bellerophon fell to earth, wandering about henceforth in deep dejection.]

[5] ["Rash Salmoneus," King of Elis, who wishing to be called a god, used to drive his chariot over a brazen bridge to imitate the thunder, and darted burning torches on either side, to imitate the lightning; for which impiety he was himself struck with a thunderbolt and placed in the infernal regions, near his brother Sisyphus—as Virgil relates (*Æneid*, vi. 585). His daring in thundering against Zeus is mentioned at the beginning of Lucian's *Timon*.]

—the Corinthian Acropolis, two thousand feet high, being the centre of the crossing currents of the winds, and of the commerce of Greece.[1] Therefore, Athena, and the fountain cloud Pegasus, are more closely connected with Corinth than even with Athens in their material, though not in their moral power; and Sisyphus founds the Isthmian games in connection with a melancholy story about the sea gods;[2] but he himself is κέρδιστος ἀνδρῶν, the most "gaining" and subtle of men:[3] who, having the key of the Isthmus, becomes the type of transit, transfer, or trade, as such; and of the apparent gain from it, which is not gain; and this is the real meaning of his punishment in hell—eternal toil and recoil (the modern idol of capital being, indeed, the stone of Sisyphus with a vengeance, *crushing* in its recoil). But, throughout, the old ideas of the cloud power and cloud feebleness,—the deceit of its hiding,—and the emptiness of its vanishing,—the Autolycus enchantment of making black seem white,—and the disappointed fury of Ixion (taking shadow for power),[4] mingle in the moral meaning of this and its collateral legends; and give an aspect, at last, not only of foolish cunning, but of impiety or literal "idolatry," "imagination worship," to the dreams of avarice and injustice, until this notion of atheism and insolent blindness becomes principal; and the *Clouds* of Aristophanes, with the personified "just" and "unjust" sayings in the latter part of the play, foreshadow, almost feature by feature, in all that they were written to mock and to chastise, the worst elements of the impious "δῖνος"[5] and

[1] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 50 (above, p. 100).]

[2] [Pausanias ii. 1, 3: "they say that the child Melicertes was landed on this spot by a dolphin, and that Sisyphus found him lying, buried him on the isthmus, and instituted the Isthmian games in his honour." Melicertes, son of Athamas and Ino, had been saved by his mother from the fury of his father. She in despair had thrown herself with her son in her arms into the sea; but Poseidon, pitying her, changed her into a sea-goddess, Leucothea: see above, p. 325.]

[3] [*Iliad*, vi. 153: compare "The Tortoise of Ægina," § 14 (Vol. XX.), where the legend of Sisyphus is further discussed.]

[4] [On this myth, compare *Unto this Last*, § 74 (Vol. XVII. p. 99).]

[5] [See *Clouds*, 380, where Socrates is represented as putting Δῖνος (whirling, rotation) in place of Δῖος (Zeus).]

tumult in men's thoughts, which have followed on their avarice in the present day, making them alike forsake the laws of their ancient gods, and misapprehend or reject the true words of their existing teachers.

80. All this we have from the legends of the historic Æolus only; but, besides these, there is the beautiful story of Semele, the mother of Bacchus.[1] She is the cloud with the strength of the vine in its bosom, consumed by the light which matures the fruit; the melting away of the cloud into the clear air at the fringe of its edges being exquisitely rendered by Pindar's epithet for her, Semele, "with the stretched-out hair" (*τανυέθειρα*[2]). Then there is the entire tradition of the Danaïdes, and of the tower of Danaë and golden shower;[3] the birth of Perseus connecting this legend with that of the Gorgons and Graiæ, who are the true clouds of thunderous and ruinous tempest. I must, in passing, mark for you that the form of the sword or sickle of Perseus, with which he kills Medusa, is another image of the whirling harpy vortex, and belongs especially to the sword of destruction or annihilation; whence it is given to the two angels who gather for destruction the evil harvest and evil vintage of the earth (Rev. xiv. 15). I will collect afterwards and complete what I have already written respecting the Pegasean and Gorgonian legends,[4] noting here only what is necessary to explain the central myth of Athena herself, who represents the ambient air, which included all cloud, and rain, and dew, and darkness, and peace, and wrath of heaven. Let me now try to give you, however briefly, some distinct idea of the several agencies of this great goddess.

[1] [Here Ruskin explains as a nature-myth the story of Semele, who was visited by Zeus attended with clouds, lightning, and thunderbolt, and, unable to endure so much majesty, was consumed by fire. Compare *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 183.]

[2] [*Olymp.*, ii. 46.]

[3] [Discussed in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 185).]

[4] [One of several unfulfilled intentions in the department of Greek mythology: see above, Introduction, p. lxvi. The Pegasean and Gorgonian legends had already been discussed in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 181 *seq.*).]

31. I. She is the air giving life and health to all animals.

II. She is the air giving vegetative power to the earth.

III. She is the air giving motion to the sea, and rendering navigation possible.

IV. She is the air nourishing artificial light, torch or lamplight; as opposed to that of the sun, on one hand, and of *consuming* * fire on the other.

V. She is the air conveying vibration of sound.

I will give you instances of her agency in all these functions.

32. First, and chiefly, she is air as the spirit of life, giving vitality to the blood. Her psychic relation to the vital force in matter lies deeper, and we will examine it afterwards;[1] but a great number of the most interesting passages in Homer regard her as flying over the earth in local and transitory strength, simply and merely the goddess of fresh air.[2]

It is curious that the British city which has somewhat saucily styled itself the Modern Athens,[3] is indeed more under her especial tutelage and favour in this respect than perhaps any other town in the island. Athena is first simply what in the Modern Athens you so practically find her, the breeze of the mountain and the sea; and wherever she comes, there is purification, and health, and power. The sea-beach round this isle of ours is the frieze of our Parthenon, every wave that breaks on it thunders with Athena's voice; nay, whenever you throw your window wide open in the morning, you let in Athena, as wisdom and fresh air at the same instant; and whenever you draw a pure, long, full breath of right heaven, you take Athena

* Not a scientific, but a very practical and expressive distinction.

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[1] [Below, §§ 51 *seq.*, pp. 351 *seq.*]

[2] [Ruskin gives instances below, p. 330.]

[3] [Compare *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 42 (Vol. XII. p. 65).]

into your heart, through your blood; and with the blood, into the thoughts of your brain.[1]

Now this giving of strength by the air, observe, is mechanical as well as chemical. You cannot strike a good blow but with your chest full; and in hand to hand fighting, it is not the muscle that fails first, it is the breath; the longest-breathed will, on the average, be the victor,—not the strongest. Note how Shakspeare always leans on this. Of Mortimer, in "changing hardiment with great Glendower":[2]—

> "Three times they breathed, and three times did they drink,
> Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood."

And again, Hotspur sending challenge to Prince Harry:—

> "That none might draw short breath to-day
> But I and Harry Monmouth."

Again, of Hamlet, before he receives his wound:—

> "He's fat, and scant of breath."

Again, Orlando in the wrestling:—

> "Yes, I beseech your grace: I am not yet well breathed."

Now of all people that ever lived, the Greeks knew best what breath meant, both in exercise and in battle; and therefore the queen of the air becomes to them at once the queen of bodily strength in war; not mere brutal muscular strength,—that belongs to Ares,—but the strength of young lives passed in pure air and swift exercise,—Camilla's virginal force, that "flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main."[3]

[1] [This passage is quoted by Tyndall in his *Hours of Exercise in the Alps*, p. 302 (ed. 1899).]

[2] [The passages referred to are in *1 Henry IV.*, i. 3, and v. 2 ("And that no man," etc.: Ruskin quotes from memory); *Hamlet*, v. 2; *As You Like It*, i. 2.]

[3] [*Æneid*, vii. 808. Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface 1882 (Vol. XVIII. p. 50); and for other references to Camilla, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 255); *Academy Notes*, 1875 (Vol. XIV. p. 308); *Art of England*, § 80; and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 66.]

33. Now I will rapidly give you two or three instances of her direct agency in this function. First, when she wants to make Penelope bright and beautiful; and to do away with the signs of her waiting and her grief. "Then Athena thought of another thing; she laid her into deep sleep, and loosed all her limbs, and made her taller, and made her smoother, and fatter, and whiter than sawn ivory; and breathed ambrosial brightness over her face; and so she left her and went up to heaven."[1] Fresh air and sound sleep at night, young ladies! You see you may have Athena for lady's maid whenever you choose. Next, hark how she gives strength to Achilles when he is broken with fasting and grief. Jupiter pities him and says to her, —"'Daughter mine, are you forsaking your own soldier, and don't you care for Achilles any more? see how hungry and weak he is,—go and feed him with ambrosia.' So he urged the eager Athena; and she leapt down out of heaven like a harpy falcon, shrill voiced; and she poured nectar and ambrosia, full of delight, into the breast of Achilles, that his limbs might not fail with famine: then she returned to the solid dome of her strong father."[2] And then comes the great passage about Achilles arming—for which we have no time. But here is again Athena giving strength to the whole Greek army. She came as a falcon to Achilles, straight at him;—a sudden drift of breeze; but to the army she must come widely,—she sweeps round them all. "As when Jupiter spreads the purple rainbow over heaven, portending battle or cold storm, so Athena, wrapping herself round with a purple cloud, stooped to the Greek soldiers, and raised up each of them."[3] Note that purple, in Homer's use of it, nearly always means "fiery," "full of light."[4] It is the light of the rainbow, not the colour of it, which Homer means you to think of.

[1] [*Odyssey*, xviii. 187–197 (freely rendered: see above, p. 308 *n.*).]
[2] [*Iliad*, xix. 342–351.]
[3] [*Ibid.*, xvii. 547–552.]
[4] [See above, § 20 *n.*, p. 313; and compare § 91, p. 379.]

34. But the most curious passage of all, and fullest of meaning, is when she gives strength to Menelaus, that he may stand unwearied against Hector. He prays to her: "And blue-eyed Athena was glad that he prayed to her, first; and she gave him strength in his shoulders, and in his limbs, and she gave him the courage"—of what animal, do you suppose? Had it been Neptune or Mars, they would have given him the courage of a bull, or lion; but Athena gives him the courage of the most fearless in attack of all creatures—small or great—and very small it is, but wholly incapable of terror,—she gives him the courage of a fly.[1]

35. Now this simile of Homer's is one of the best instances I can give you of the way in which great writers seize truths unconsciously which are for all time. It is only recent science which has completely shown the perfectness of this minute symbol of the power of Athena; proving that the insect's flight and breath are co-ordinated; that its wings are actually forcing pumps, of which the stroke compels the thoracic respiration; and that it thus breathes and flies simultaneously by the action of the same muscles, so that respiration is carried on most vigorously during flight, "while the air-vessels, supplied by many pairs of lungs instead of one, traverse the organs of flight in far greater numbers than the capillary blood-vessels of our own system, and give enormous and untiring muscular power, a rapidity of action measured by thousands of strokes in the minute, and an endurance, by miles and hours of flight." *

Homer could not have known this; neither that the buzzing of the fly was produced as in a wind instrument, by a constant current of air through the trachea. But

* Ormerod. *Natural History of Wasps.*[2]

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[1] [*Iliad*, xvii. 566–570: καὶ οἱ μιλτῃ θάρσος ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἐνῆκεν.]

[2] [Most of the phrases occur, but the passage is not an exact quotation; it and the preceding sentences being put together from E. A. Ormerod's *British Social Wasps: an Introduction to their . . . General Natural History*, pp. 99–124.]

he had seen, and, doubtless, meant us to remember, the marvellous strength and swiftness of the insect's flight (the glance of the swallow itself is clumsy and slow compared to the darting of common house-flies at play); he probably attributed its murmur to the wings, but in this also there was a type of what we shall presently find recognized in the name of Pallas,—the vibratory power of the air to convey sound,—while, as a purifying creature, the fly holds its place beside the old symbol of Athena in Egypt, the vulture; and as a venomous and tormenting creature, has more than the strength of the serpent in proportion to its size, being thus entirely representative of the influence of the air both in purification and pestilence; and its courage is so notable that, strangely enough, forgetting Homer's simile, I happened to take the fly for an expression of the audacity of freedom in speaking of quite another subject.* Whether it should be called courage, or mere mechanical instinct, may be questioned, but assuredly no other animal, exposed to continual danger, is so absolutely without sign of fear.

86. You will, perhaps, have still patience to hear two instances, not of the communication of strength, but of the personal agency of Athena as the air. When she comes down to help Diomed against Ares, she does not come to fight instead of him, but she takes his charioteer's place.

> "She snatched the reins, she lashed with all her force,
> And full on Mars impelled the foaming horse."[1]

Ares is the first to cast his spear; then, note this:—Pope says—

> "Pallas opposed her hand, and caused to glance,
> Far from the car, the strong immortal lance."[2]

* See farther on, § 148.[3]

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[1] [*Iliad*, v. 840, 841; 1034, 1035 in Pope's version. Compare § 27, above (p. 323), and *Ethics of the Dust*, Vol. XVIII. p. 365.]

[2] [*Ibid.*, 1046, 1047 in Pope's version.]

[3] [This is a passage which was reprinted in *Queen of the Air* from *The Cestus of Aglaia*: see now p. 123, above.]

She does not *oppose* her hand in the Greek, for the wind could not meet the lance straight. She catches it in her hand, and throws it off. There is no instance in which a lance is so parried by a mortal hand in all the *Iliad;* and it is exactly the way the wind would parry it, catching it and turning it aside. If there be any good rifleshots here, they know something about Athena's parrying—and in old times the English masters of feathered artillery knew more yet. Compare also the turning of Hector's lance from Achilles: *Iliad*, xx. 439.

87. The last instance I will give you is as lovely as it is subtle. Throughout the *Iliad* Athena is herself the will or Menis of Achilles. If he is to be calmed, it is she who calms him; if angered, it is she who inflames him. In the first quarrel with Atrides, when he stands at pause, with the great sword half drawn, "Athena came from heaven, and stood behind him, and caught him by the yellow hair."[1] Another god would have stayed his hand upon the hilt, but Athena only lifts his hair. "And he turned and knew her, and her dreadful eyes shone upon him."[2] There is an exquisite tenderness in this laying her hand upon his hair, for it is the talisman of his life, vowed to his own Thessalian river if he ever returned to its shore, and cast upon Patroclus' pile, so ordaining that there should be no return.[3]

88. Secondly—Athena is the air giving vegetative impulse to the earth. She is the wind and the rain—and yet more the pure air itself, getting at the earth fresh turned by spade or plough—and, above all, feeding the fresh

[1] [*Iliad*, i. 194–197. Here, again, compare *Ethics of the Dust*, Vol. XVIII. p. 365.]

[2] [*Ibid.*, 199, 200.]

[3] [*Ibid.*, xxiii. 140 *seq.* (thus rendered by Pope):—

"But great Achilles stands apart in prayer,
And from his head divides the yellow hair;
Those curling locks which from his youth he vowed,
And sacred grew, to Sperchius' honoured flood:
Then sighing, to the deep his looks he cast,
And rolled his eyes around the watery waste."

For an interpretation of the dedication of the hair as a nature-myth, see above, § 12, p. 305.]

leaves; for though the Greeks knew nothing about carbonic acid, they did know that trees fed on the air.

Now, note first in this, the myth of the air getting at ploughed ground. You know I told you the Lord of all labour by which man lived was Hephæstus;[1] therefore Athena adopts a child of his, and of the earth,—Erichthonius,—literally, "the tearer up of the ground"—who is the head (though not in direct line) of the kings of Attica; and having adopted him, she gives him to be brought up by the three nymphs of the dew. Of these, Aglauros, the dweller in the fields, is the envy or malice of the earth; she answers nearly to the envy of Cain, the tiller of the ground, against his shepherd brother, in her own envy against her two sisters, Herse, the cloud dew, who is the beloved of the shepherd Mercury; and Pandrosos, the diffused dew, or dew of heaven. Literally, you have in this myth the words of the blessing of Esau—"Thy dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above."[2] Aglauros is for her envy turned into a black stone; and hers is one of the voices,—the other being that of Cain,—which haunts the circle of envy in the Purgatory:—

"Io sono Aglauro, chi divenne sasso."[3]

But to her two sisters, with Erichthonius, (or the hero Erectheus,) is built the most sacred temple of Athena in Athens; the temple to their own dearest Athena—to her, and to the dew together: so that it was divided into two parts: one, the temple of Athena of the city, and the other that of the dew.[4] And this expression of her power, as the air bringing the dew to the hill pastures, in the central temple of the central city of the heathen, dominant

[1] [See above, § 13 (p. 305).]

[2] [Genesis xxvii. 39.]

[3] [*Purgatorio*, xiv. 139. Compare Ruskin's Preface, § 19, to *The Economist of Xenophon*.]

[4] [The Erechtheum seems to have included three distinct shrines—the Temple of Athena Polias, the most revered sanctuary of Athens (compare § 15, above, p. 306); the shrines of Erechtheus and Poseidon; and, thirdly, the Pandroseion.]

over the future intellectual world, is, of all the facts connected with her worship as the spirit of life, perhaps the most important. I have no time now to trace for you the hundredth part of the different ways in which it bears both upon natural beauty, and on the best order and happiness of men's lives. I hope to follow out some of these trains of thought in gathering together what I have to say about field herbage; but I must say briefly here that the great sign, to the Greeks, of the coming of spring in the pastures, was not, as with us, in the primrose, but in the various flowers of the asphodel tribe (of which I will give you some separate account presently[1]); therefore it is that the earth answers with crocus flame to the cloud on Ida;[2] and the power of Athena in eternal life is written by the light of the asphodel on the Elysian fields.

But farther, Athena is the air, not only to the lilies of the field, but to the leaves of the forest. We saw before[3] the reason why Hermes is said to be the son of Maia, the eldest of the sister stars of spring. Those stars are called not only Pleiades, but Vergiliæ, from a word mingling the ideas of the turning or returning of spring-time with the out-pouring of rain.[4] The mother of Virgil bearing the name

[1] [Below, §§ 82, 83, pp. 373, 374.]

[2] [See *Iliad*, xiv. 347 *seq.*, where in the recesses of Mount Ida, "beneath them the divine earth caused fresh grass to spring up, and dewy lotus and crocus . . . and they were clothed with a cloud, beauteous, golden." The passage is imitated by Tennyson in his description of "a vale in Ida" (*Œnone*, 97):—

"It was the deep mid-noon: one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like flame."]

[3] [Above § 26, p. 321.]

[4] [Ruskin is here thinking of a passage in Max Müller: "It was the sailor who, before entrusting his life and goods to the winds and the waves of the ocean, watched for the rising of those stars which he called the Sailing-stars or *Pleiades*, from *plein*, to sail. Navigation in the Greek waters was considered safe after the return of the Pleiades; and it closed when they disappeared. The Latin name for the *Pleiades* is *Vergiliæ*, from *virga*, a sprout or twig. This name was given to them by the Italian husbandmen, because in Italy, where they became visible about May, they marked the return of summer" (*Lectures on the Science of Language*, vol. i. p. 8). Ruskin was fond of finding, or forcing, the significance of names, but he seems here to forget that Vergilius was the name, not of an individual, but of the poet's *gens*.]

of Maia, Virgil himself received his name from the seven stars; and he, in forming, first, the mind of Dante, and through him that of Chaucer (besides whatever special minor influence came from the *Pastorals* and *Georgics*), became the fountain-head of all the best literary power connected with the love of vegetative nature among civilized races of men. Take the fact for what it is worth; still it is a strange seal of coincidence, in word and in reality, upon the Greek dream of the power over human life, and its purest thoughts, in the stars of spring. But the first syllable of the name of Virgil has relation also to another group of words, of which the English ones, virtue, and virgin, bring down the force to modern days.[1] It is a group containing mainly the idea of "spring," or increase of life in vegetation—the rising of the new branch of the tree out of the bud, and of the new leaf out of the ground. It involves, secondarily, the idea of greenness and of strength, but primarily, that of living increase of a new rod from a stock, stem, or root; ("There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse;"[2]) and chiefly the stem of certain plants—either of the rose tribe, as in the budding of the almond rod of Aaron; or of the olive tribe, which has triple significance in this symbolism, from the use of its oil for sacred anointing, for strength in the gymnasium, and for light. Hence, in numberless divided and reflected ways, it is connected with the power of Hercules and Athena: Hercules plants the wild olive, for its shade, on the course of Olympia, and it thenceforward gives the Olympic crown, of consummate honour and rest;[3] while the prize at the Panathenaic games is a vase of its oil, (meaning encouragement to continuance of effort); and from the paintings on these Panathenaic vases we get the most precious clue to the entire character of Athena. Then to express its propagation by slips, the trees from

[1] [Compare *Ethics of the Dust*, §§ 71, 80 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 288, 301).]
[2] [Isaiah xi. 1.]
[3] [See Pausanias, v. 7, 4.]

which the oil was to be taken were called "Moriai,"[1] trees of division (being all descendants of the sacred one in the Erechtheum). And thus, in one direction, we get to the "children like olive plants round about thy table" and the olive grafting of St. Paul;[2] while the use of the oil for anointing gives chief name to the rod itself of the stem of Jesse, and to all those who were by that name signed for his disciples first in Antioch. Remember, farther, since that name was first given, the influence of the symbol, both in extreme unction, and in consecration of priests and kings to their "divine right"; and think, if you can reach with any grasp of thought, what the influence on the earth has been, of those twisted branches whose leaves give grey bloom to the hillsides under every breeze that blows from the midland sea. But, above and beyond all, think how strange it is that the chief Agonia of humanity, and the chief giving of strength from heaven for its fulfilment, should have been under its night shadow in Palestine.[3]

39. Thirdly—Athena is the air in its power over the sea.

On the earliest Panathenaic vase known—the "Burgon" vase in the British Museum[4]—Athena has a dolphin on her shield. The dolphin has two principal meanings in Greek symbolism. It means, first, the sea; secondarily, the ascending and descending course of any of the heavenly

[1] ["The word seems to me to contain an allusion to their supposed origin: it is an historical expression of this very propagation or *partition* of these olives from the one stock in the Erechtheum. *μοριὰ ἔλαια* is olea *partitiva*. The word itself (from *μείρω*, *μόρος*, etc.) still survives in its compound *συμμορία*, a *class*. All the Athenian olives were thus conceived to be the offspring of one sacred parent: they were the offspring of the Will of Minerva; the sanctity of the parent served to protect its offspring" (Chr. Wordsworth's *Athens and Attica*, 1836, p. 136 and *n.*).]

[2] [Psalms cxxviii. 3; Romans xi. 17. Christ, the anointed; and "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts xi. 26).]

[3] [See Matthew xxvi. 30, 36. The traditional site of the Garden of Gethsemane is at the foot of Mount Olivet, where eight aged olive-trees "have always struck even the most indifferent observers" (see Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, ch. xiv.).]

[4] [Called the "Burgon Vase" because found (in 1813, on the site of an ancient cemetery outside the city walls of Athens) in the presence of Thomas Burgon (for whom see Vol. IX. p. 466 *n.*), as described in *Transactions Royal Society of Literature*, vol. ii. pt. i. p. 107 (for a summary, see E. T. Cook's *Popular Handbook to the . . . British Museum*, p. 330). The vase is numbered B. 130.]

bodies from one sea horizon to another—the dolphin's arching rise and re-plunge (in a summer evening, out of calm sea, their black backs roll round with exactly the slow motion of a water-wheel; but I do not know how far Aristotle's exaggerated account of their leaping or their swiftness has any foundation,[1]) being taken as a type of the emergence of the sun or stars from the sea in the east and plunging beneath in the west. Hence, Apollo, when in his personal power he crosses the sea, leading his Cretan colonists to Pytho, takes the form of a dolphin, becomes Apollo Delphinius, and names the founded colony "Delphi."* The lovely drawing of the Delphic Apollo on the hydria of the Vatican (Lenormant and De Witte, vol. ii. pl. 6[2]), gives the entire conception of this myth. Again, the beautiful coins of Tarentum represent Taras coming to found the city, riding on a dolphin,[3] whose leaps and plunges have partly the rage of the sea in them, and partly the spring of the horse, because the splendid riding of the Tarentines had made their name proverbial in Magna Græcia. The story of Arion[4] is a collateral fragment of the same thought; and again, the plunge before their transformation, of the ships of Æneas.[5] Then, this idea of

* See Notes on Pindar, *Pyth.*, iv.[6]

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[1] [*Hist. An.*, ix. 48, 4, where it is said that the dolphin leaps over the masts of ships, and darts as quick as an arrow. For another reference to the Greek type of dolphin, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 276). See also Vol. II. p. 114 *n.*]

[2] [*Élite des Monuments Céramographiques . . . expliqués et commentés par Ch. Lenormant et J. de Witte*, 4 vols., 1837, etc. The plate is at p. 20; and is here reproduced (Plate XV.). The design is further discussed in *Lectures on Art*, § 52 (Vol. XX.), and Ruskin placed the plate (cut from his copy of Lenormant) in the Reference Series, No. 207.]

[3] [On these coins of Tarentum, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 18 (above, p. 69), and for the legend of Taras, see "The Riders of Tarentum" in Vol. XX.]

[4] [See Ruskin's early poem on the subject (1842): Vol. II. p. 114.]

[5] [*Æneid*, ix. 119.]

[6] [This note was added by the reviser in 1883. The true reference is, however, to the Homeric Hymn to Apollo: "And whereas I first, in the misty sea, sprang aboard the swift ship in the guise of a dolphin, therefore pray to me as Apollo Delphinius, while mine shall ever be the Delphian altar seen from afar" (*The Homeric Hymns: a New Prose Translation*, by Andrew Lang, 1899, p. 130).]

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The Delphic Apollo

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career upon, or conquest of the sea, either by the creatures themselves, or by dolphin-like ships, (compare the Merlin prophecy,—

"They shall ride
Over ocean wide
With hempen bridle, and horse of tree,"[1])

connects itself with the thought of undulation, and of the wave-power in the sea itself, which is always expressed by the serpentine bodies either of the sea-gods or of the sea-horse; and when Athena carries, as she does often in later work, a serpent for her shield-sign, it is not so much the repetition of her own ægis-snakes as the farther expression of her power over the sea-wave; which, finally, Virgil gives in its perfect unity with her own anger, in the approach of the serpents against Laocoon from the sea:[2] and then, finally, when her own storm-power is fully put forth on the ocean also, and the madness of the ægis-snake is given to the wave-snake, the sea-wave becomes the devouring hound at the waist of Scylla,[3] and Athena takes Scylla for her helmet-crest; while yet her beneficent and essential power on the ocean, in making navigation possible, is commemorated in the Panathenaic festival by her peplus being carried to the Erechtheum suspended from the mast of a ship.[4]

[1] [Thomas of Ercildoune. Quoted also in *The Harbours of England*, Vol. XIII. p. 49.]

[2] [*Æneid*, ii. 205.]

[3] [The dogs at the waist of Scylla may be seen in a Pompeian wall-painting figured in Plate 53 (o) of Miss Jane Harrison's *Myths of the Odyssey*: "there is something of the sea-horse about them; they may have been intended as a sort of indication of the cruel sea waves" (p. 190). For reference to another aspect of the dogs, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 58 (above, p. 107). Scylla, as Athena's head-crest, may be seen on a magnificent coin of Thurium in the British Museum (III. C. 17, and Plate 25 in the *Guide to the Principal Coins of the Ancients*, 1889): the reverse of the same coin is figured and described in *Aratra Pentelici*, § 203. See also Ruskin's instance of the type at the end of the present §.]

[4] [The robe of Athena is supposed to have been fixed to the mast of a ship with wheels (see Meineke's *Frag. Com.*, ii. 772). The only existing copy of the ship may be seen in the frieze of the small metropolitan church in Athens. The two designs are here reproduced (Plate XVI.). Ruskin discusses them again in *Lectures on Art*, § 153; and he placed the plate from Lenormant in the Reference Series, No. 186 (Vol. XX.).]

In Plate cxv. of vol. ii., Lenormant,[1] are given two sides of a vase, which, in rude and childish way, assembles most of the principal thoughts regarding Athena in this relation. In the first the sunrise is represented by the ascending chariot of Apollo, foreshortened; the light is supposed to blind the eyes, and no face of the god is seen. (Turner, in the Ulysses and Polyphemus sunrise, loses the form of the god in light, giving the chariot-horses only;[2] rendering in his own manner, after 2,200 years of various fall and revival of the arts, precisely the same thought as the old Greek potter.) He ascends out of the sea; but the sea itself has not yet caught the light. In the second design, Athena as the morning breeze, and Hermes as the morning cloud, fly over the sea before the sun. Hermes turns back his head; his face is unseen in the cloud, as Apollo's in the light; the grotesque appearance of an animal's face is only the cloud-phantasm modifying a frequent form of the hair of Hermes beneath the back of his cap. Under the morning breeze, the dolphins leap from the rippled sea, and their sides catch the light.

The coins of the Lucanian Heracleia give a fair representation of the helmed Athena, as imagined in later Greek art, with the embossed Scylla.[3]

40. Fourthly—Athena is the air nourishing artificial light—unconsuming fire. Therefore, a lamp was always kept burning in the Erechtheum; and the torch-race belongs chiefly to her festival,[4] of which the meaning is to show the danger of the perishing of the light even by excess

[1] [At p. 386; from a small Bacchic amphora, black-figured, in the Cabinet de Médailles at the Louvre.]

[2] [For this picture (No. 508 in the National Gallery), see Vol. XIII. p. 136.]

[3] [See IV. C. 16 and Plate 34 in the British Museum *Guide to the Principal Coins of the Ancients*, 1889. The type is seen also in the Athena of Thurium (on Plate XX. of Vol. XX.).]

[4] ["Callimachus made a golden lamp for the goddess. They fill the lamp with oil, and wait till the same day next year, and the oil suffices for the lamp during all the intervening time, though it is burning night and day" (Pausanias, i. 26, 7: see also Strabo, ix. p. 396, and Plutarch's *Lives of Numa*, 3, and of *Sulla*, 13). For another interpretation of the ritual of the perpetual fire or lamp (which was by no means confined to the cult of Athena), see Frazer's *Pausanias*, vol. iv. p. 441. A

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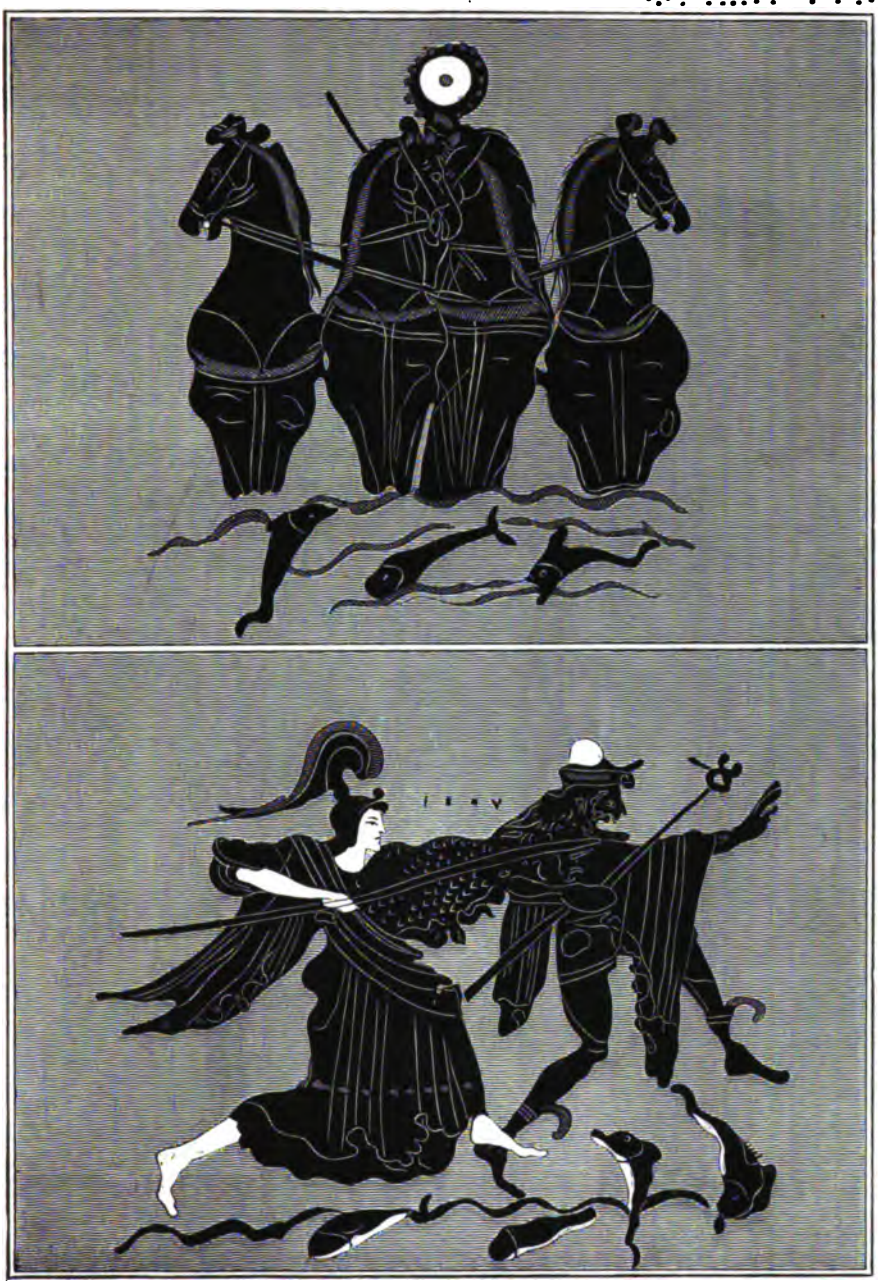

The Chariot of Apollo

Athena as the Morning Breeze; and Hermes as the Morning Cloud

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of the air that nourishes it: and so that the race is not to the swift,[1] but to the wise. The household use of her constant light is symbolized in the lovely passage in the *Odyssey*, where Ulysses and his son move the armour while the servants are shut in their chambers, and there is no one to hold torches for them; but Athena herself, "having a golden lamp,"[2] fills all the rooms with light. Her presence in war-strength with her favourite heroes is always shown by the "unwearied"[3] fire hovering on their helmets and shields; and the image gradually becomes constant and accepted, both for the maintenance of household watchfulness, as in the parable of the ten virgins, or as the symbol of direct inspiration, in the rushing wind and divided flames of Pentecost:[4] but, together with this thought of unconsuming and constant fire, there is always mingled in the Greek mind the sense of the consuming by excess, as of the flame by the air, so also of the inspired creature by its own fire (thus, again, "the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up"—"my zeal hath consumed me, because of thine enemies,"[5] and the like); and especially Athena has this aspect towards the truly sensual and bodily strength; so that to Ares, who is himself insane and consuming, the opposite wisdom seems to be insane and consuming: "All we the other gods have thee against us, O Jove! when we would give grace to men; for thou hast begotten the maid without a mind—the mischievous creature, the doer of unseemly evil. All we obey thee, and are ruled by thee. Her only thou wilt not resist in anything she says

torch-race in the Ceramicus was one of the events of the Panathenaic Festival; similar races were held at other festivals (for their ritual significance, see *ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 392): in the British Museum, there is a relief (No. 814), illustrating the well-known passage at the beginning of Plato's *Republic* (see E. T. Cook's *Handbook to the Greek and Roman Antiquities in the British Museum*, p. 247).]

[1] [Ecclesiastes ix. 11.]

[2] [*Odyssey*, xix. 34.]

[3] [*Iliad*, v. 4 (where Athena gives strength to Diomede): δαΐδ᾽ οἱ ἐκ κόρυθός τε καὶ ἀσπίδος ἀκάμαντον πῦρ.]

[4] [Matthew xxv.; Acts ii. 2, 3.]

[5] [Psalms lxix. 9; cxix. 139.]

or does, because thou didst bear her—consuming child as she is."[1]

41. Lastly—Athena is the air conveying vibration of sound.

In all the loveliest representations in central Greek art of the birth of Athena, Apollo stands close to the sitting Jupiter, singing, with a deep, quiet joyfulness, to his lyre.[2] The sun is always thought of as the master of time and rhythm, and as the origin of the composing and inventive discovery of melody; but the air, as the actual element and substance of the voice, the prolonging and sustaining power of it, and the symbol of its moral passion. Whatever in music is measured and designed, belongs therefore to Apollo and the Muses; whatever is impulsive and passionate, to Athena: hence her constant strength of voice or cry (as when she aids the shout of Achilles[3]) curiously opposed to the dumbness of Demeter.[4] The Apolline lyre, therefore, is not so much the instrument producing sound, as its measurer and divider by length or tension of string into given notes; and I believe it is, in a double connection with its office as a measurer of time or motion, and its relation to the transit of the sun in the sky, that Hermes forms it from the tortoise-shell,[5] which is the image of the dappled concave of the cloudy sky. Thenceforward all the limiting or restraining modes of music belong to the Muses; but the passionate music is wind music, as in the Doric

[1] [*Iliad*, v. 872–880.]

[2] [The position may be seen in the early Greek vase of "The Nativity of Athena," in *Aratra Pentelici*, § 74.]

[3] [*Iliad*, xviii. 217–218; compare *Ethics of the Dust*, Vol. XVIII. p. 364 n.]

[4] [Who, however, had reason for her silence in absorbing grief for her daughter. "In silence she waited, casting down her lovely eyes. . . . Then sat she down and held the veil before her face; long in sorrow and silence sat she so, and spake to no man nor made any sign, but smileless she sat, nor tasted meat nor drink, wasting with long desire for her deep-bosomed daughter" (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter:* Lang's translation).]

[5] [In the British Museum there is a bronze disk (No. 856) with a relief representing Hermes making the lyre; thus illustrating the passage in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, where the poet describes how the god found a tortoise and recognized the soul of music in its shell (see Andrew Lang's translation of *The Homeric Hymns*, p. 136).]

flute. Then, when this inspired music becomes degraded in its passion, it sinks into the pipe of Pan, and the double pipe of Marsyas, and is then rejected by Athena.[1] The myth which represents her doing so is that she invented the double pipe from hearing the hiss of the Gorgonian serpents; but when she played upon it, chancing to see her face reflected in water, she saw that it was distorted, whereupon she threw down the flute, which Marsyas found. Then, the strife of Apollo and Marsyas represents the enduring contest between music in which the words and thought lead, and the lyre measures or melodizes them, (which Pindar means when he calls his hymns "kings over the lyre,"[2]) and music in which the words are lost, and the wind or impulse leads,—generally, therefore, between intellectual, and brutal, or meaningless, music.[3] Therefore, when Apollo prevails, he flays Marsyas, taking the limit and external bond of his shape from him, which is death, without touching the mere muscular strength; yet shameful and dreadful in dissolution.

42. And the opposition of these two kinds of sound is continually dwelt upon by the Greek philosophers, the real fact at the root of all their teaching being this,—that true music[4] is the natural expression of a lofty passion for a right cause; that in proportion to the kingliness and force of any personality, the expression either of its joy or suffering

[1] [In a letter to Professor Norton already mentioned (above, p. 311 n.) Ruskin says: "I found out the Piping and Fluting from the Pindaric ode which describes Athena making the Pan's pipe out of Medusa's hair." The reference is to the Twelfth Pythian Ode, but the suggestion that Athena made the pipe out of Medusa's hair is Ruskin's own. Pindar says: "But the Maiden, when that she had delivered her well-beloved from these toils, contrived the manifold music of the flute, that with such instrument she might repeat the shrill lament that reached her from Euryale's ravening jaws" (Myers).]

[2] [*ἀναξιφόρμιγγες ὕμνοι* (*Olymp.*, ii. 1): compare "The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts," § 19 (above, p. 177).]

[3] [With this passage should be compared *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 82 and 83, and the communication printed in the latter from Dr. A. S. Murray, suggesting another interpretation of the myth of Marsyas. Ruskin also adds in that place some notes on other myths about music.]

[4] [The passage from "true music is the natural expression . . ." down to ". . . subtlest aid of moral degradation" was here incorporated from Ruskin's Rede Lecture, § 18: see above, p. 176.]

becomes measured, chastened, calm, and capable of interpretation only by the majesty of ordered, beautiful, and worded sound. Exactly in proportion to the degree in which we become narrow in the cause and conception of our passions, incontinent in the utterance of them, feeble of perseverance in them, sullied or shameful in the indulgence of them, their expression by musical sound becomes broken, mean, fatuitous, and at last impossible; the measured waves of the air of heaven will not lend themselves to expression of ultimate vice, it must be for ever sunk into discordance or silence. And since, as before stated, every work of right art has a tendency to reproduce the ethical state which first developed it, this, which of all the arts is most directly ethical in origin, is also the most direct in power of discipline; the first, the simplest, the most effective of all instruments of moral instruction;[1] while in the failure and betrayal of its functions, it becomes the subtlest aid of moral degradation. Music is thus, in her health, the teacher of perfect order, and is the voice of the obedience of angels, and the companion of the course of the spheres of heaven; and in her depravity she is also the teacher of perfect disorder and disobedience, and the Gloria in Excelsis becomes the Marseillaise. In the third section of this volume, I reprint two chapters from another essay of mine, (*The Cestus of Aglaia*)* on modesty or measure, and on liberty, containing farther reference to music in her two powers; and I do this now, because, among the many monstrous and misbegotten fantasies which are the spawn of modern licence, perhaps the most impishly opposite to the truth is the conception of music which has rendered possible the writing, by educated persons, and, more strangely yet, the

* *Art Journal*, New Series, vols. iv. and v., 1865–1866 [1883].[2]

[1] [On the place of music in education, compare also *Time and Tide*, § 42 (Vol. XVII. p. 353).]

[2] [See now, above, pp. 72–81, 120–133.]

tolerant criticism, of such words as these:—"*This so persuasive art is the only one that has no didactic efficacy, that engenders no emotions save such as are without issue on the side of moral truth, that expresses nothing of God, nothing of reason, nothing of human liberty.*" I will not give the author's name; the passage is quoted in the *Westminster Review* for last January (1869), p. 158.[1]

43. I must also anticipate something of what I have to say respecting the relation of the power of Athena to organic life, so far as to note that her name, Pallas, probably refers to the quivering or vibration of the air;[2] and to its power, whether as vital force, or communicated wave, over every kind of matter, in giving it vibratory movement; first, and most intense, in the voice and throat of the bird, which is the air incarnate; and so descending through the various orders of animal life to the vibrating and semi-voluntary murmur of the insect; and, lower still, to the hiss, or quiver of the tail, of the half-lunged snake and deaf adder; all these, nevertheless, being wholly under the rule of Athena as representing either breath, or vital nervous power; and, therefore, also, in their simplicity, the "oaten pipe and pastoral song,"[3] which belong to her dominion over the asphodel meadows, and breathe on their banks of violets.

Finally, is it not strange to think of the influence of this one power of Pallas in vibration; (we shall see a singular mechanical energy of it presently in the serpent's motion[4]), in the voices of war and peace? How much of the repose—how much of the wrath, folly, and misery of men, has literally depended on this one power of the air;—

[1] [In an article entitled "Art and Morality," being a review of *Le Sentiment de la Nature avant le Christianisme* (1866), and *Le Sentiment de la Nature chez les Modernes* (1868), by Victor Richard de Laprade.]

[2] [From πάλλω, to quiver. Some say that the goddess was so called as the brandisher of the spear; others derive the word from πάλλαξ, Doric for παῖς, the maiden.]

[3] [Collins, *Ode to Evening*: "If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song"; compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 10 (above, p. 62).]

[4] [See below, pp. 361–363.]

on the sound of the trumpet and of the bell—on the lark's song, and the bee's murmur!

44. Such is the general conception in the Greek mind of the physical power of Athena. The spiritual power associated with it is of two kinds:—first, she is the Spirit of Life in material organism; not strength in the blood only, but formative energy in the clay: and, secondly, she is inspired and impulsive wisdom in human conduct and human art, giving the instinct of infallible decision, and of faultless invention.

It is quite beyond the scope of my present purpose—and, indeed, will only be possible for me at all after marking the relative intention of the Apolline myths—to trace for you the Greek conception of Athena as the guide of moral passion. But I will at least endeavour, on some near occasion,* to define some of the actual truths respecting the vital force in created organism, and inventive fancy in the works of man, which are more or less expressed by the Greeks, under the personality of Athena. You would, perhaps, hardly bear with me if I endeavoured farther to show you—what is nevertheless perfectly true—the analogy between the spiritual power of Athena in her gentle ministry, yet irresistible anger, with the ministry of another Spirit whom we also, believing in as[1] the universal power of life, are forbidden, at our worst peril, to quench or to grieve.[2]

45. But, I think, to-night, you should not let me close, without requiring of me an answer on one vital point, namely, how far these imaginations of Gods—which are vain to us—were vain to those who had no better trust? and what real belief the Greek had in these creations of

* I have tried to do this in mere outline in the two following sections of this volume.

[1] ["Believing in as" was substituted in 1883 for "holding for."]

[2] [1 Thessalonians v. 19: "Quench not the Spirit." Ephesians iv. 30: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."]

his own spirit, practical and helpful to him in the sorrow of earth? I am able to answer you explicitly in this. The origin of his thoughts is often obscure, and we may err in endeavouring to account for their form of realization; but the effect of that realization on his life is not obscure at all. The Greek creed was, of course, different in its character, as our own creed is, according to the class of persons who held it. The common people's was quite literal, simple, and happy: their idea of Athena was as clear as a good Roman Catholic peasant's idea of the Madonna. In Athens itself, the centre of thought and refinement, Pisistratus obtained the reins of government through the ready belief of the populace that a beautiful woman, armed like Athena, was the goddess herself.[1] Even at the close of the last century some of this simplicity remained among the inhabitants of the Greek islands; and when a pretty English lady[2] first made her way into the grotto of Antiparos, she was surrounded, on her return, by all the women of the neighbouring village, believing her to be divine, and praying her to heal them of their sicknesses.

46. Then, secondly, the creed of the upper classes was more refined and spiritual, but quite as honest, and even more forcible in its effect on the life. You might imagine that the employment of the artifice just referred to implied utter unbelief in the persons contriving it; but it really meant only that the more worldly of them would play with a popular faith for their own purposes, as doubly-minded persons have often done since, all the while sincerely holding

[1] [See the note at Vol. VII. p. 277 (*Modern Painters*, vol. v.), where Ruskin cites this incident as evidence of "the reality of Greek belief."]

[2] [Lady Craven (Margravine of Anspach,) whose portrait by Romney is in the National Gallery (No. 1669). See *Letters from the Right Honourable Lady Craven to his Serene Highness the Margrave of Anspach*, 1814, p. 219 (a letter dated from Athens, May 21, 1786): "I was now much surprised to find myself surrounded by Greek peasant women, one pointing to her head, another to her stomach, a third to her arm, all bewailing their ill state of health, and touching my clothes with devotion. I found at last, that hearing a woman had descended, they took her to be a Supernatural Being, and were perfectly convinced I could cure all disorders."]

the same ideas themselves in a more abstract form; while the good and unworldly men, the true Greek heroes, lived by their faith as firmly as S. Louis, or the Cid, or the Chevalier Bayard.[1]

47. Then, thirdly, the faith of the poets and artists was, necessarily, less definite, being continually modified by the involuntary action of their own fancies; and by the necessity of presenting, in clear verbal or material form, things of which they had no authoritative knowledge. Their faith was, in some respects, like Dante's or Milton's: firm in general conception, but not able to vouch for every detail in the forms they gave it: but they went considerably farther, even in that minor sincerity, than subsequent poets; and strove with all their might to be as near the truth as they could. Pindar says, quite simply, "I cannot think so-and-so of the Gods. It must have been this way—it cannot have been that way—that the thing was done."[2] And as late among the Latins as the days of Horace, this sincerity remains. Horace is just as true and simple in his religion as Wordsworth;[3] but all power of understanding any of the honest classic poets has been taken away from most English gentlemen by the mechanical drill in verse-writing at school. Throughout the whole of their lives afterwards, they never can get themselves quit of the notion that all verses were written as an exercise, and that Minerva was only a convenient word for the last of an hexameter, and Jupiter for the last but one.

48. It is impossible that any notion can be more fallacious or more misleading in its consequences. All great song, from the first day when human lips contrived syllables, has been sincere song. With deliberate didactic purpose the tragedians—with pure and native passion the

[1] [For St. Louis as a type, see Vol. XII. p. 138; for the Cid, *Munera Pulveris*, § 35 (Vol. XVII. p. 167), and *Eagle's Nest*, § 240; for Bayard, Vol. XII. p. 55, and *Val d'Arno*, § 274.]

[2] [See the passage about the legend of Tantalus, cited in the note on p. 316, above.]

[3] [Compare the Rede Lecture, § 13 (above, p. 173), and *Val d'Arno*, §§ 218 *seq.*]

lyrists—fitted their perfect words to their dearest faiths. "Operosa parvus carmina fingo."[1] "I, little thing that I am, weave my laborious songs" as earnestly as the bee among the bells of thyme on the Matin mountains. Yes, and he dedicates his favourite pine to Diana, and he chants his autumnal hymn to Faunus guarding[2] his fields, and he guides the noble youths and maids of Rome in their choir to Apollo, and he tells the farmer's little girl that the Gods will love her, though she has only a handful of salt and meal to give them[3]—just as earnestly as ever English gentleman taught Christian faith to English youth, in England's truest days.

49. Then, lastly, the creed of the philosophers or sages varied according to the character and knowledge of each;—their relative acquaintance with the secrets of natural science—their intellectual and sectarian egotism—and their mystic or monastic tendencies, for there is a classic as well as a mediæval monasticism. They ended in losing the life of Greece in play upon words; but we owe to their early thought some of the soundest ethics, and the foundation of the best practical laws, yet known to mankind.

50. Such was the general vitality of the heathen creed in its strength. Of its direct influence on conduct, it is, as I said, impossible for me to speak now; only, remember always, in endeavouring to form a judgment of it, that what of good or right the heathens did, they did looking

[1] [Horace: *Odes*, iv. 2, 27–32:—

"Ego apis matinæ
More modoque
Grata carpentis thyma per laborem
Plurimum circa nemus uvidique
Tiburis ripas operosa parvus
Carmina fingo."

Quoted also in *Val d'Arno*, § 221, and referred to in *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 42 (above, p. 94).]

[2] ["Faunus guarding" was substituted in 1883 for "the Faun that guards."]

[3] [The references here are to *Odes*, iii. 22—which in a list of titles for all the *Odes* Ruskin calls "Diana's Pine"; iii. 18 ("Faune, Nympharum"); i. 21 ("Dianam teneræ. . . . Vos Tempe totidem. . . . Natalemque, mares, Delon Apollinis"); and iii. 23, 17–20.]

for no reward.[1] The purest forms of our own religion have always consisted in sacrificing less things to win greater;—time, to win eternity,—the world, to win the skies. The order, "sell that thou hast," is not given without the promise,—"thou shalt have treasure in heaven;"[2] and well for the modern Christian if he accepts the alternative as his Master left it—and does not practically read the command and promise thus: "Sell that thou hast in the best market, and thou shalt have treasure in eternity also." But the poor Greeks of the great ages expected no reward from heaven but honour, and no reward from earth but rest;—though, when, on those conditions, they patiently, and proudly, fulfilled their task of the granted day, an unreasoning instinct of an immortal benediction broke from their lips in song: and they, even they, had sometimes a prophet to tell them of a land "where there is sun alike by day, and alike by night — where they shall need no more to trouble the earth by strength of hands for daily bread—but the ocean breezes blow around the blessed islands, and golden flowers burn on their bright trees for evermore."[3]

[1] [On this aspect of Greek conduct, compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. p. 398.]

[2] [Matthew xix. 21.]

[3] [Rendered freely from Pindar, *Olymp.*, ii. 109–130. Compare § 84, below, p. 375; and, again, the end of the author's Introduction to *Crown of Wild Olive* (Vol. XVIII. p. 399).]

II

ATHENA KERAMITIS*

(Athena in the Earth)

Study, supplementary to the preceding lecture, of the supposed, and actual, relations of Athena to the vital force in material organism.

51. It has been easy to decipher approximately the Greek conception of the physical power of Athena in cloud and sky, because we know ourselves what clouds and skies are, and what the force of the wind is in forming them. But it is not at all easy to trace the Greek thoughts about the power of Athena in giving life, because we do not ourselves know clearly what life is, or in what way the air is necessary to it, or what there is, besides the air, shaping the forms that it is put into. And it is comparatively of small consequence to find out what the Greeks thought or meant, until we have determined what we ourselves think, or mean, when we translate the Greek word for "breathing" into the Latin-English word "spirit."

52. But it is of great consequence that you should fix in your minds—and hold, against the baseness of mere materialism on the one hand, and against the fallacies of controversial speculation on the other—the certain and practical sense of this word "spirit";—the sense in which you may all know that its reality exists, as the power which shaped you into your shape, and by which you love, and hate, when you have received that shape. You need not

* "Athena, fit for being made into pottery." I coin the expression[1] as a counterpart of γῆ παρθένια, "Clay intact."

[1] [That is, the application of the epithet to Athena; the word κεραμῖτις itself being often used with γῆ for "potter's earth."]

fear, on the one hand, that either the sculpturing or the loving power can ever be beaten down by the philosophers into a metal or evolved by them into a gas: but, on the other hand, take care that you yourselves, in trying to elevate your conception of it, do not lose its truth in a dream, or even in a word. Beware always of contending for words: you will find them not easy to grasp, if you know them in several languages. This very word, which is so solemn in your mouths, is one of the most doubtful. In Latin it means little more than breathing, and may mean merely accent; in French it is not breath, but wit, and our neighbours are therefore obliged, even in their most solemn expressions, to say "wit" when we say "ghost." In Greek, "pneuma," the word we translate "ghost," means either wind or breath,[1] and the relative word "psyche" has, perhaps, a more subtle power; yet St. Paul's words "pneumatic body" and "psychic body"[2] involve a difference in his mind which no words will explain. But in Greek and in English, and in Saxon and in Hebrew, and in every articulate tongue of humanity, the "spirit of man" truly means his passion and virtue, and is stately according to the height of his conception, and stable according to the measure of his endurance.

53. Endurance, or patience, that is the central sign of spirit; a constancy against the cold and agony of death; and as, physically, it is by the burning power of the air that the heat of the flesh is sustained, so this Athena, spiritually, is the queen of all glowing virtue, the unconsuming fire and inner lamp of life. And thus, as Hephæstus* is lord of the fire of the hand, and Apollo of the fire of the brain, so Athena of the fire of the heart; and as

* Vulcan (mulciber) [1883].

[1] Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 23 (Vol. XVIII. p. 73). See also *Proserpina*, ii. ch. v. § 1, where Ruskin says that the present paragraph defines the sense in which the word "spirit" is used throughout his writings, and refers to §§ 59, 60, "with respect to its office in plants."]

[2] [1 Corinthians xv. 44: ἔστι σῶμα ψυχικόν, καὶ ἔστι σῶμα πνευματικόν. Translated in our version: "There is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body."]

Hercules wears for his chief armour the skin of the Nemean lion, his chief enemy, whom he slew; and Apollo has for his highest name "the Pythian," from his chief enemy, the Python, slain;[1] so Athena bears always on her breast the deadly face of her chief enemy slain, the Gorgonian cold, and venomous agony, that turns living men to stone.

54. And so long as you have that fire of the heart within you, and know the reality of it, you need be under no alarm as to the possibility of its chemical or mechanical analysis. The philosophers are very humorous in their ecstasy of hope about it; but the real interest of their discoveries in this direction is very small to human kind. It is quite true that the tympanum of the ear vibrates under sound, and that the surface of the water in a ditch vibrates too: but the ditch hears nothing for all that; and my hearing is still to me as blessed a mystery as ever, and the interval between the ditch and me, quite as great. If the trembling sound in my ears was once of the marriage bell which began my happiness, and is now of the passing bell which ends it, the difference between those two sounds to me cannot be counted by the number of concussions. There have been some curious speculations lately as to the conveyance of mental consciousness by "brain-waves."[2] What does it matter how it is conveyed? The consciousness itself is not a wave. It may be accompanied here or there by any quantity of quivers and shakes, up or down, of anything you can find in the universe that is shakeable —what is that to me? My friend is dead, and my—according to modern views—vibratory sorrow is not one whit less, or less mysterious to me, than my old quiet one.

55. Beyond, and entirely unaffected by, any questionings of this kind, there are, therefore, two plain facts which we should all know: first, that there is a power which gives their several shapes to things, or capacities of shape; and,

[1] [Compare Vol. VII. p. 420 and *n.*]

[2] [Speculations which assumed vibrations in "mentipherous ether" and which the Psychical Research Society afterwards took up under the head of "telepathy" (see *Proceedings S. P. R.*, October 1886, p. 178.]

secondly, a power which gives them their several feelings, or capacities of feeling; and that we can increase or destroy both of these at our will. By care and tenderness, we can extend the range of lovely life in plants and animals; by our neglect and cruelty, we can arrest it, and bring pestilence in its stead. Again, by right discipline we can increase our strength of noble will and passion, or destroy both. And whether these two forces are local conditions of the elements in which they appear, or are part of a great force in the universe, out of which they are taken, and to which they must be restored, is not of the slightest importance to us in dealing with them; neither is the manner of their connection with light and air. What precise meaning we ought to attach to expressions such as that of the prophecy to the four winds that the dry bones might be breathed upon,[1] and might live, or why the presence of the vital power should be dependent on the chemical action of the air, and its awful passing away materially signified by the rendering up of that breath or ghost, we cannot at present know, and need not at any time dispute. What we assuredly know is that the states of life and death are different, and the first more desirable than the other, and by effort attainable, whether we understand being "born of the spirit"[2] to signify having the breath of heaven in our flesh, or its power in our hearts.

56. As to its power on the body, I will endeavour to tell you, having been myself much led into studies involving necessary reference both to natural science and mental phenomena, what, at least, remains to us after science has done its worst;—what the Myth of Athena, as a Formative and Decisive power—a Spirit of Creation and Volition, —must eternally mean for all of us.

57. It is now (I believe I may use the strong word) "ascertained" that heat and motion are fixed in quantity,

[1] [Ezekiel i. 1–9.]
[2] [John iii. 5.]

and measurable in the portions that we deal with.[1] We can measure out portions of power, as we can measure portions of space; while yet, as far as we know, space may be infinite, and force infinite. There may be heat as much greater than the sun's, as the sun's heat is greater than a candle's; and force as much greater than the force by which the world swings, as that is greater than the force by which a cobweb trembles. Now, on heat and force, life is inseparably dependent; and I believe, also, on a form of substance, which the philosophers call "protoplasm."[2] I wish they would use English instead of Greek words. When I want to know why a leaf is green, they tell me it is coloured by "chlorophyll,"[3] which at first sounds very instructive; but if they would only say plainly that a leaf is coloured green by a thing which is called "green leaf," we should see more precisely how far we had got. However, it is a curious fact that life is connected with a cellular structure called protoplasm, or, in English, "first stuck together": whence conceivably through deutoroplasms, or second stickings, and tritoplasms, or third stickings,* we reach the highest plastic phase in the human pottery, which differs from common china-ware, primarily, by a measurable degree of heat, developed in breathing,

* Or, perhaps, we may be indulged with one consummating gleam of "glycasm"—visible "Sweetness,"—according to the good old monk "Full moon," or "All moonshine." I cannot get at his original Greek, but am content with M. Durand's clear French (*Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne.* Paris, 1845[4]):—"Lorsque vous aurez fait le proplasme, et esquissé un visage, vous ferez les chairs avec le glycasme dont nous avons donné la recette. . . . Chez les vieillards, vous indiquerez les rides, et chez les jeunes gens, les angles des yeux. . . . C'est ainsi que l'on fait les chairs, suivant Pansélinos."

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[1] [Tyndall's *Heat as a Mode of Motion* had been published in 1863.]

[2] [The word, first used by Hugo Von Mohl in 1846, was popularized in this country in 1868 by Huxley in his address on "The Physical Basis of Life" (see his *Lay Sermons*, vii.).]

[3] [Compare *Academy Notes*, 1875 (Vol. XIV. p. 283).]

[4] [*Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne Grecque et Latine avec une Introduction et des Notes, par M. Didron, traduit du Manuscrit Byzantin, Le Guide de la Peinture, par Dr. Paul Durand.* The quotation is at pp. 35, 36. For other references to the book, see Vol. X. p. 128 *n.*, and Vol. XII. p. 262.]

which it borrows from the rest of the universe while it lives, and which it as certainly returns to the rest of the universe, when it dies.

58. Again, with this heat certain assimilative powers are connected, which the tendency of recent discovery is to simplify more and more into modes of one force; or finally into mere motion, communicable in various states, but not destructible. We will assume that science has done its utmost; and that every chemical or animal force is demonstrably resolvable into heat or motion, reciprocally changing into each other. I would myself like better, in order of thought, to consider motion as a mode of heat than heat as a mode of motion; still, granting that we have got thus far, we have yet to ask, What is heat? or what, motion? What is this "primo mobile,"[1] this transitional power, in which all things live, and move, and have their being?[2] It is by definition something different from matter, and we may call it as we choose—"first cause," or "first light," or "first heat"; but we can show no scientific proof of its not being personal, and coinciding with the ordinary conception of a supporting spirit in all things.

59. Still, it is not advisable to apply the word "spirit" or "breathing" to it, while it is only enforcing chemical affinities; but, when the chemical affinities are brought under the influence of the air, and of the sun's heat, the formative force enters an entirely different phase. It does not now merely crystallize indefinite masses, but it gives to limited portions of matter the power of gathering, selectively, other elements proper to them, and binding these elements into their own peculiar and adopted form.

This force, now properly called life, or breathing, or spirit, is continually creating its own shells of definite shape out of the wreck around it: and this is what I meant by saying, in the *Ethics of the Dust*:—"you may always

[1] [See above, § 26, p. 324 *n.*]
[2] [Acts xvii. 28.]

stand by form against force."[1] For the mere force of junction is not spirit; but the power that catches out of chaos charcoal, water, lime, or what not, and fastens them down into a given form, is properly called "spirit"; and we shall not diminish, but strengthen our conception of this creative energy by recognizing its presence in lower states of matter than our own;—such recognition being enforced upon us by a delight we instinctively receive from all the forms of matter which manifest it: and yet more, by the glorifying of those forms, in the parts of them that are most animated, with the colours that are pleasantest to our senses. The most familiar instance of this is the best, and also the most wonderful:—the blossoming of plants.

60. The Spirit in the plant—that is to say, its power of gathering dead matter out of the wreck round it, and shaping it into its own chosen shape,—is of course strongest at the moment of its flowering, for it then not only gathers, but forms, with the greatest energy.

And where this Life is in it at full power, its form becomes invested with aspects that are chiefly delightful to our own human passions; namely, first, with the loveliest outlines of shape: and, secondly, with the most brilliant phases of the primary colours, blue, yellow, and red or white, the unison of all;[2] and, to make it all more strange, this time of peculiar and perfect glory is associated with relations of the plants or blossoms to each other, correspondent to the joy of love in human creatures, and having the same object in the continuance of the race. Only, with respect to plants, as animals, we are wrong in speaking as if the object of this strong life were only the bequeathing of itself. The flower is the end or proper object of the seed, not the seed of the flower. The reason for seeds is that flowers may be; not the reason of flowers that seeds may be. The flower itself is the creature which

[1] [§ 107; Vol. XVIII. p. 342.]

[2] [With this passage compare the discussion of Vital Beauty in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 146 *seq.*).]

the spirit makes; only, in connection with its perfectness, is placed the giving birth to its successor.[1]

61. The main fact, then, about a flower is that it is the part of the plant's form developed at the moment of its intensest life: and this inner rapture is usually marked externally for us by the flush of one or more of the primary colours. What the character of the flower shall be, depends entirely upon the portion of the plant into which this rapture of spirit has been put. Sometimes the life is put into its outer sheath, and then the outer sheath becomes white and pure, and full of strength and grace; sometimes the life is put into the common leaves, just under the blossom, and they become scarlet or purple; sometimes the life is put into the stalks of the flower, and they flush blue; sometimes in its outer enclosure or calyx; mostly into its inner cup; but in all cases, the presence of the strongest life is asserted by characters in which the human sight takes pleasure, and which seem prepared with distinct reference to us, or rather, bear, in being delightful, evidence of having been produced by the power of the same spirit as our own.

62. And we are led to feel this still more strongly, because all the distinctions of species,* both in plants and animals, appear to have similar connection with human character. Whatever the origin of species may be, or however those species, once formed, may be influenced by external accident, the groups into which birth or accident reduce them have distinct relation to the spirit of man. It

* The facts on which I am about to dwell are in nowise antagonistic to the theories which Mr. Darwin's unwearied and unerring investigations are every day rendering more probable.[2] The æsthetic relations of species are independent of their origin. Nevertheless, it has always seemed to me, in what little work I have done upon organic forms, as if the species mocked us by their deliberate imitation of each other when they met: yet did not pass one into another.

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[1] [Compare *Proserpina*, i. ch. iv., and *Præterita*, i. § 59.]

[2] [For Ruskin's personal acquaintance with Darwin at this time, see Introduction; above, p. xlv.]

is perfectly possible, and ultimately conceivable, that the crocodile and the lamb may have descended from the same ancestral atom of protoplasm; and that the physical laws of the operation of calcareous slime and of meadow grass, on that protoplasm, may in time have developed the opposite natures and aspects of the living frames; but the practically important fact for us is the existence of a power which creates that calcareous earth itself;—which creates that, separately, and quartz, separately, and gold, separately, and charcoal, separately; and then so directs the relations of these elements that the gold may destroy the souls of men by being yellow; and the charcoal destroy their souls by being hard and bright; and the quartz represent to them an ideal purity; and the calcareous earth, soft, may beget crocodiles, and dry and hard, sheep; and that the aspects and qualities of these two products, crocodiles and lambs, may be, the one repellent to the spirit of man, the other attractive to it, in a quite inevitable way, representing to him states of moral evil and good, and becoming myths to him of destruction or redemption, and, in the most literal sense, "Words" of God.

68. And the force of these facts cannot be escaped from by the thought that there are species innumerable, passing into each other by regular gradations, out of which we choose what we most love or dread, and say they were indeed prepared for us. Species are not innumerable; neither are they now connected by consistent gradation. They touch at certain points only; and even then are connected, when we examine them deeply, in a kind of reticulated way, not in chains, but in chequers; also, however connected, it is but by a touch of the extremities, as it were, and the characteristic form of the species is entirely individual. The rose nearly sinks into a grass in the sanguisorba;[1] but the formative spirit does not the less clearly separate the ear of wheat from the dog-rose, and oscillate

[1] [The Common Burnet and Lady's-mantle are examples of the *sanguisorba*, which Linnæus identified with the order *Rosaceæ*.]

with tremulous constancy round the central forms of both, having each their due relation to the mind of man. The great animal kingdoms are connected in the same way. The bird through the penguin drops towards the fish, and the fish in the cetacean reascends to the mammal, yet there is no confusion of thought possible between the perfect forms of an eagle, a trout, and a war-horse, in their relations to the elements, and to man.

64. Now we have two orders of animals to take some note of in connection with Athena, and one vast order of plants, which will illustrate this matter very sufficiently for us.

The two orders of animals are the serpent and the bird; the serpent, in which the breath, or spirit, is less than in any other creature, and the earth-power greatest:—the bird, in which the breath, or spirit, is more full than in any other creature, and the earth-power least.

65. We will take the bird first. It is little more than a drift of the air brought into form by plumes; the air is in all its quills, it breathes through its whole frame and flesh, and glows with air in its flying, like a blown flame: it rests upon the air, subdues it, surpasses it, outraces it;—*is* the air, conscious of itself, conquering itself, ruling itself.

Also, into the throat of the bird is given the voice of the air. All that in the wind itself is weak, wild, useless in sweetness, is knit together in its song. As we may imagine the wild form of the cloud closed into the perfect form of the bird's wings, so the wild voice of the cloud into its ordered and commanded voice; unwearied, rippling through the clear heaven in its gladness, interpreting all intense passion through the soft spring nights, bursting into acclaim and rapture of choir at daybreak, or lisping and twittering among the boughs and hedges through heat of day, like little winds that only make the cowslip bells shake, and ruffle the petals of the wild rose.

66. Also, upon the plumes of the bird are put the colours of the air: on these the gold of the cloud, that cannot be

gathered by any covetousness; the rubies of the clouds, that are not the price of Athena, but *are* Athena; the vermilion of the cloud-bar, and the flame of the cloud-crest, and the snow of the cloud, and its shadow, and the melted blue of the deep wells of the sky—all these, seized by the creating spirit, and woven by Athena herself into films and threads of plume; with wave on wave following and fading along breast, and throat, and opened wings, infinite as the dividing of the foam and the sifting of the sea-sand;—even the white down of the cloud seeming to flutter up between the stronger plumes, seen, but too soft for touch.

And so the Spirit of the Air is put into, and upon, this created form; and it becomes, through twenty centuries, the symbol of Divine help, descending, as the Fire, to speak, but as the Dove, to bless.

67. Next, in the serpent we approach the source of a group of myths, world-wide, founded on great and common human instincts, respecting which I must note one or two points which bear intimately on all our subject.[1] For it seems to me that the scholars who are at present occupied in interpretation of human myths have most of them forgotten that there are any such things as natural myths; and that the dark sayings of men may be both difficult to read, and not always worth reading; but the dark sayings of nature will probably become clearer for the looking into, and will very certainly be worth reading. And, indeed, all guidance to the right sense of the human and variable myths will probably depend on our first getting at the sense of the natural and invariable ones. The dead hieroglyph may have meant this or that—the living hieroglyph means always the same; but remember, it is just as much a hieroglyph as the other; nay, more,—a "sacred or reserved sculpture," a thing with an inner language. The serpent crest of the king's crown, or of the god's, on the pillars of Egypt, is a mystery; but the serpent itself, gliding past the pillar's foot, is it less a mystery? Is there, indeed, no tongue, except

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says of the serpent in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 26.]

the mute forked flash from its lips, in that running brook of horror on the ground?

68. Why that horror? We all feel it, yet how imaginative it is, how disproportioned to the real strength of the creature! There is more poison in an ill-kept drain,—in a pool of dish-washings at a cottage door,—than in the deadliest asp of Nile. Every back-yard which you look down into from the railway, as it carries you out by Vauxhall or Deptford, holds its coiled serpent:[1] all the walls of those ghastly suburbs are enclosures of tank temples for serpent worship; yet you feel no horror in looking down into them, as you would if you saw the livid scales and lifted head. There is more venom, mortal, inevitable, in a single word sometimes, or in the gliding entrance of a wordless thought, than ever "vanti Libia con sua rena."[2] But that horror is of the myth, not of the creature. There are myriads lower than this, and more loathsome, in the scale of being; the links between dead matter and animation drift everywhere unseen. But it is the strength of the base element that is so dreadful in the serpent; it is the very omnipotence of the earth. That rivulet of smooth silver—how does it flow, think you? It literally rows on the earth, with every scale for an oar; it bites the dust with the ridges of its body. Watch it, when it moves slowly:—A wave, but without wind! a current, but with no fall![3] all the body moving at the same instant, yet some of it to one side, some to another, or some forward, and the rest of the coil backwards; but all with the same calm will and equal way—no contraction, no extension; one soundless, causeless march of sequent rings, and spectral procession of spotted dust, with dissolution in its fangs, dislocation in its coils. Startle it;—the winding stream will become a twisted arrow;—the wave of

[1] [For other passages in which Ruskin notes the horror of the approaches to London, see *Lectures on Art*, § 122; *Val d'Arno*, § 33; and *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 44 and 64.]

[2] [*Inferno*, xxiv. 85, where Dante describes a crowd of terrible serpents, so strange and hideous that "let Libya vaunt no more of her sands."]

[3] [Compare the lecture on Snakes, included under the title "Living Waves" in *Deucalion*, ii. ch. i. § 35, where Ruskin quotes this description.]

poisoned life will lash through the grass like a cast lance.* It scarcely breathes with its one lung (the other shrivelled and abortive); it is passive to the sun and shade, and is cold or hot like a stone; yet, "it can outclimb the monkey, outswim the fish, outleap the jerboa, outwrestle the athlete, and crush the tiger." † It is a divine hieroglyph of the demoniac power of the earth,—of the entire earthly nature. As the bird is the clothed power of the air, so this is the clothed power of the dust; as the bird the symbol of the spirit of life, so this of the grasp and sting of death.

69. Hence the continual change in the interpretation put upon it in various religions. As the worm of corruption, it is the mightiest of all adversaries of the gods—the special adversary of their light and creative power —Python against Apollo. As the power of the earth against the air, the giants are serpent-bodied in the Gigantomachia;[1] but as the power of the earth upon the seed—consuming it into new life ("that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die"[2])—serpents sustain the chariot of the spirit of agriculture.

* I cannot understand this swift forward motion of serpents. The seizure of prey by the constrictor, though invisibly swift, is quite simple in mechanism; it is simply the return to its coil of an opened watchspring, and is just as instantaneous. But the steady and continuous motion, without a visible fulcrum (for the whole body moves at the same instant, and I have often seen even small snakes glide as fast as I could walk), seems to involve a vibration of the scales quite too rapid to be conceived. The motion of the crest and dorsal fin of the hippocampus,[3] which is one of the intermediate types between serpent and fish, perhaps gives some resemblance of it, dimly visible, for the quivering turns the fin into a mere mist. The entrance of the two barbs of a bee's sting by alternate motion, "the teeth of one barb acting as a fulcrum for the other," must be something like the serpent motion on a small scale. (Note of 1883. Cp. the Lecture "A Caution to Snakes," *Deucalion*, Part VII.[4])

† Richard Owen.[5]

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[1] [Best seen in the reliefs of the battle of the gods and giants on the great altar of Pergamon (now at Berlin).]

[2] [1 Corinthians xv. 36.]

[3] [See Ruskin's drawing of "the sea-horse of Venice": Plate 5 in Vol. IV. p. 154.]

[4] [So the reviser printed in 1883. The note itself, however, was in the original editions. Only the reference to *Deucalion* is the "Note of 1883."]

[5] [*On the Anatomy of Vertebrates, vol. i., Fishes and Reptiles*, 1866, p. 261. "Jerboa" in Ruskin's quotation has hitherto been misprinted "zebra."]

70. Yet, on the other hand, there is a power in the earth to take away corruption, and to purify, (hence the very fact of burial, and many uses of earth, only lately known);[1] and in this sense, the serpent is a healing spirit,—the representative of Æsculapius, and of Hygieia; and is a sacred earth-type in the temple of the Dew;—being there especially a symbol of the native earth of Athens; so that its departure from the temple was a sign to the Athenians that they were to leave their homes.[2] And then, lastly, as there is a strength and healing in the earth, no less than the strength of air, so there is conceived to be a wisdom of earth no less than a wisdom of the spirit; and when its deadly power is killed, its guiding power becomes true; so that the Python serpent is killed at Delphi, where yet the oracle is from the breath of the earth.

71. You must remember, however, that in this, as in every other instance, I take the myth at its central time. This is only the meaning of the serpent to the Greek mind which could conceive an Athena. Its first meaning to the nascent eyes of men, and its continued influence over degraded races, are subjects of the most fearful mystery. Mr. Fergusson has just collected the principal evidence bearing on the matter in a work of very great value,[3] and if you read his opening chapters, they will put you in possession of the circumstances needing chiefly to be considered. I cannot touch upon any of them here, except only to point out that, though the doctrine of the so-called "corruption of human nature," asserting that there is nothing but evil in humanity, is just as blasphemous and false as a doctrine of the corruption of physical nature would be, asserting there was nothing but evil in the earth,—there is yet the clearest evidence of a disease,

[1] [The Rev. Henry Moule (1801–1880) had first invented the dry-earth system of sanitation in 1860.]

[2] [Before the battle of Salamis: see Herodotus, viii. 41.]

[3] [*Tree and Serpent Worship; or, Illustrations of Mythology and Art in India . . . with Introductory Essays and Descriptions of the Plates*, by James Fergusson, F.R.S.: India Museum, 1868.]

plague, or cretinous imperfection of development, hitherto allowed to prevail against the greater part of the races of men;[1] and this in monstrous ways, more full of mystery than the serpent-being itself. I have gathered for you to-night only instances of what is beautiful in Greek religion; but even in its best time there were deep corruptions in other phases of it, and degraded forms of many of its deities, all originating in a misunderstood worship of the principle of life; while in the religions of lower races, little else than these corrupted forms of devotion can be found;—all having a strange and dreadful consistency with each other, and infecting Christianity, even at its strongest periods, with fatal terror of doctrine, and ghastliness of symbolic conception, passing through fear into frenzied grotesque, and thence into sensuality.

In the Psalter of S. Louis itself, half of its letters are twisted snakes;[2] there is scarcely a wreathed ornament, employed in Christian dress, or architecture, which cannot be traced back to the serpent's coil; and there is rarely a piece of monkish decorated writing in the world, that is not tainted with some ill-meant vileness of grotesque—nay, the very leaves of the twisted ivy-pattern of the fourteenth century can be followed back to wreaths for the foreheads of bacchanalian gods. And truly, it seems to me, as I gather in my mind the evidences of insane religion, degraded art, merciless war, sullen toil, detestable pleasure, and vain or vile hope, in which the nations of the world have lived since first they could bear record of themselves—it seems to me, I say, as if the race itself were still half-serpent, not extricated yet from its clay; a lacertine breed of bitterness—the glory of it emaciate with cruel hunger, and blotted with venomous stain: and the track of it, on the leaf a glittering slime, and in the sand a useless furrow.

[1] [With this passage compare Ruskin's letter of June 8, 1869, given in the Introduction; above, p. 1. Compare also *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 106–107 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 474–475).]

[2] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, §§ 50, 53 (above, pp. 100–102).]

72. There are no myths, therefore, by which the moral state and fineness of intelligence of different races can be so deeply tried or measured, as by those of the serpent and the bird; both of them having an especial relation to the kind of remorse for sin, or grief in fate, of which the national minds that spoke by them had been capable. The serpent and vulture are alike emblems of immortality and purification among races which desired to be immortal and pure: and as they recognize their own misery, the serpent becomes to them the scourge of the Furies, and the vulture finds its eternal prey in their breast. The bird long contests, among the Egyptians, with the still received serpent, the symbol of power. But the Draconian image of evil is established in the serpent Apap;[1] while the bird's wings, with the globe, become part of a better symbol of deity, and the entire form of the vulture, as an emblem of purification, is associated with the earliest conception of Athena.[2] In the type of the dove with the olive branch, the conception of the spirit of Athena in renewed life prevailing over ruin, is embodied for the whole of futurity; while the Greeks, to whom, in a happier climate and higher life than that of Egypt, the vulture symbol of cleansing became unintelligible, took the eagle, instead, for their hieroglyph of supreme spiritual energy, and it thenceforward retains its hold on the human imagination, till it is established among Christian myths as the expression of the most exalted form of evangelistic teaching.[3] The special relation of Athena to her favourite bird we will trace presently;[4] the peacock of Hera, and dove of Aphrodite, are comparatively unimportant myths: but the

[1] ["The battle in heaven with the gigantic Apap, or great serpent; his (Ra's) final triumph, and strangling of the dragon, and his diurnal renewal of the fray, formed the subject of the walls of the tombs and sarcophagi at the time of the 18th and subsequent dynasties" (Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, ed. 1878, vol. iii. p. 59). Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 31 (above, p. 84).]

[2] [That is, of Neith, the Egyptian form of Athena, who is often represented as vulture-headed.]

[3] [See further on this subject "The Eagle of Elis" in Vol. XX.]

[4] [See below, p. 381.]

bird power is soon made entirely human by the Greeks in their flying angel of victory (partially human, with modified meaning of evil, in the Harpy and Siren); and thenceforward it associates itself with the Hebrew cherubim, and has had the most singular influence on the Christian religion by giving its wings to render the conception of angels mysterious and untenable, and check rational endeavour to determine the nature of subordinate spiritual agency; while yet it has given to that agency a vague poetical influence of the highest value in its own imaginative way.[1]

73. But with the early serpent-worship there was associated another—that of the groves—of which you will also find the evidence exhaustively collected in Mr. Fergusson's work. This tree-worship may have taken a dark form when associated with the Draconian one; or opposed, as in Judea, to a purer faith;[2] but in itself, I believe, it was always healthy, and though it retains little definite hieroglyphic power in subsequent religion, it becomes instead of symbolic, real; the flowers and trees are themselves beheld and beloved with a half-worshipping delight, which is always noble and healthful.

And it is among the most notable indications of the volition of the animating power, that we find the ethical signs of good and evil set on these also, as well as upon animals; the venom of the serpent, and in some respects its image also, being associated even with the passionless growth of the leaf out of the ground; while the distinctions of species seem appointed with more definite ethical address to the intelligence of man as their material products become more useful to him.

74. I can easily show this, and, at the same time, make clear the relation to other plants of the flowers which especially belong to Athena, by examining the natural myths in the groups of the plants which would be

[1] [Compare *Ethics of the Dust*, §§ 113 *seq.* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 349-352).]
[2] [See Exodus xxiv. 13; Deuteronomy xvi. 21, etc.]

used at any country dinner, over which Athena would, in her simplest household authority, cheerfully rule, here, in England. Suppose Horace's favourite dish of beans,[1] with the bacon; potatoes; some savoury stuffing of onions and herbs with the meat; celery, and a radish or two, with the cheese; nuts and apples for dessert, and brown bread.

75. The beans are, from earliest time, the most important and interesting of the seeds of the great tribe of plants from which came the Latin and French name for all kitchen vegetables,—things that are gathered with the hand—podded seeds that cannot be reaped, or beaten, or shaken down, but must be gathered green. "Leguminous" plants, all of them having flowers like butterflies, seeds in (frequently pendent) pods,—"lætum siliqua quassante legumen"[2]—smooth and tender leaves, divided into many minor ones,—strange adjuncts of tendril, for climbing (and sometimes of thorn);—exquisitely sweet, yet pure, scents of blossom, and almost always harmless, if not serviceable, seeds. It is, of all tribes of plants, the most definite; its blossoms being entirely limited in their parts, and not passing into other forms. It is also the most usefully extended in range and scale; familiar in the height of the forest—acacia, laburnum, Judas-tree; familiar in the sown field—bean and vetch and pea; familiar in the pasture—in every form of clustered clover and sweet trefoil tracery; the most entirely serviceable and human of all orders of plants.

76. Next, in the potato, we have the scarcely innocent underground stem of one of a tribe set aside for evil;*

* Some two out of a hundred and fifty species of Solanum are useful to man [1883].

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[1] [*Satires*, ii. 6, 63:—

"O quando faba Pythagoræ cognata, simulque
Uncta satis pingui ponentur oluscula lardo?
O noctes cœnæque deum!"

Compare Vol. XIV. p. 341.]

[2] [Virgil, *Georgics*, i. 74: "the pulse which is luxuriant with quivering pod"—a description of the bean. Compare *Proserpina*, i. ch. xi. § 16.]

having the deadly nightshade for its queen, and including the henbane, the witch's mandrake, and the worst natural curse of modern civilization—tobacco.* And the strange thing about this tribe is, that though thus set aside for evil, they are not a group distinctly separate from those that are happier in function. There is nothing in other tribes of plants like the form of the bean blossom; but there is another family with forms and structure closely connected with this venomous one. Examine the purple and yellow bloom of the common hedge nightshade; you will find it constructed exactly like some of the forms of the cyclamen; and, getting this clue, you will find at last the whole poisonous and terrible group to be—sisters of the primulas!

The nightshades are, in fact, primroses with a curse upon them; and a sign set in their petals, by which the deadly and condemned flowers may always be known from the innocent ones,—that the stamens of the nightshades are between the lobes, and of the primulas, opposite the lobes, of the corolla.

77. Next, side by side, in the celery and radish, you have the two great groups of umbelled and cruciferous plants; alike in conditions of rank among herbs: both flowering in clusters; but the umbelled group, flat, the crucifers, in spires:—both of them mean and poor in the blossom, and losing what beauty they have by too close crowding:—both of them having the most curious influence on human character in the temperate zones of the earth, from the days of the parsley crown, and hemlock drink, and mocked Euripidean chervil,[1] until now: but chiefly among the northern nations, being especially plants that

* It is not easy to estimate the demoralizing effect on the youth of Europe of the cigar, enabling them to pass their time happily in idleness.[2]

[1] [The reference is to Aristophanes, *Acharnians*, 478, where, taunting the poet with the lowly station of his mother as a herb-seller, he says σκάνδικά μοι δός, μητρόθεν δεδεγμένος ("give me chervil, and get it from your mother").]

[2] [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 18 (Vol. XVII. p. 334).]

are of some humble beauty, and (the crucifers) of endless use, when they are chosen and cultivated; but that run to wild waste, and are the signs of neglected ground, in their rank or ragged leaves, and meagre stalks, and pursed or podded seed clusters. Capable, even under cultivation, of no perfect beauty, though reaching some subdued delightfulness in the lady's smock and the wallflower; for the most part, they have every floral quality meanly, and in vain,—they are white, without purity; golden, without preciousness; redundant, without richness; divided, without fineness; massive, without strength; and slender, without grace. Yet think over that useful vulgarity of theirs; and of the relations of German and English peasant character to its food of kraut and cabbage, (as of Arab character to its food of palm-fruit,) and you will begin to feel what purposes of the forming spirit are in these distinctions of species.

78. Next we take the nuts and apples,—the nuts representing one of the groups of catkined trees, whose blossoms are only tufts and dust; and the other, the rose tribe, in which fruit and flower alike have been the types, to the highest races of men, of all passionate temptation, or pure delight, from the coveting of Eve to the crowning of the Madonna, above the

> "Rosa sempiterna,
> Che si dilata, rigrada, e ridole
> Odor di lode al Sol."[1]

We have no time now for these; we must go on to the humblest group of all, yet the most wonderful, that of the grass, which has given us our bread; and from that we will go back to the herbs.

79. The vast family of plants which, under rain, make the earth green for man; and, under sunshine, give him bread; and, in their springing in the early year, mixed with their native flowers, have given us (far more than the new

[1] [*Paradiso*, xxx. 124: the passage is referred to in Vol. V. p. 272.]

leaves of trees) the thought and word of "spring," divide themselves broadly into three great groups—the grasses, sedges, and rushes. The grasses are essentially a clothing for healthy and pure ground, watered by occasional rain, but in itself dry, and fit for all cultivated pasture and corn. They are distinctively plants with round and jointed stems, which have long green flexible leaves, and heads of seed, independently emerging from them. The sedges are essentially the clothing of waste and more or less poor or uncultivatable soils, coarse in their structure, frequently triangular in stem—hence called "acute" by Virgil[1]—and with their heads of seed not extricated from their leaves. Now, in both the sedges and grasses, the blossom has a common structure, though undeveloped in the sedges, but composed always of groups of double husks, which have mostly a spinous process in the centre, sometimes projecting into a long awn or beard; this central process being characteristic also of the ordinary leaves of mosses, as if a moss were a kind of ear of corn made permanently green on the ground, and with a new and distinct fructification. But the rushes differ wholly from the sedge and grass in their blossom structure. It is not a dual cluster, but a twice threefold one, so far separate from the grasses, and so closely connected with a higher order of plants, that I think you will find it convenient to group the rushes at once with that higher order, to which, if you will for the present let me give the general name of Drosidæ,[2] or dew-plants, it will enable me to say what I have to say of them much more shortly and clearly.

80. These Drosidæ, then, are plants delighting in interrupted moisture—moisture which comes either partially or at certain seasons—into dry ground. They are not water-plants; but the signs of water resting among dry places.

[1] [*Georgics*, iii. 231: "carice pastus acuta."]

[2] [For references to this name, see Ruskin's index to *Proserpina*. So also he calls the fritillary "Alfred's dew-flower": see *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, No. 13 (Vol. XX.).]

Many of the true water-plants have triple blossoms, with a small triple calyx holding them; in the Drosidæ, the floral spirit passes into the calyx also, and the entire flower becomes a six-rayed star, bursting out of the stem laterally, as if it were the first of flowers, and had made its way to the light by force through the unwilling green. They are often required to retain moisture or nourishment for the future blossom through long times of drought; and this they do in bulbs under ground, of which some become a rude and simple, but most wholesome food for man.

81. So now, observe, you are to divide the whole family of the herbs of the field into three great groups—Drosidæ, Carices,* Gramineæ—dew-plants, sedges, and grasses. Then the Drosidæ are divided into five great orders—lilies, asphodels, amaryllids, irids, and rushes. No tribes of flowers have had so great, so varied, or so healthy an influence on man as this great group of Drosidæ, depending not so much on the whiteness of some of their blossoms, or the radiance of others, as on the strength and delicacy of the substance of their petals; enabling them to take forms of faultless elastic curvature, either in cups, as the crocus, or expanding bells, as the true lily, or heath-like bells, as the hyacinth, or bright and perfect stars, like the star of Bethlehem, or, when they are affected by the strange reflex of the serpent nature which forms the labiate group of all flowers, closing into forms of exquisitely fantastic symmetry in the gladiolus. Put by their side their Nereid sisters, the water-lilies, and you have in them the origin of the loveliest forms of ornamental design, and the most powerful floral myths yet recognized among human spirits, born by the streams of Ganges, Nile, Arno, and Avon.[1]

* I think Carex will be found ultimately better than Cyperus for the generic name, being the Virgilian word, and representing a larger subspecies.

[1] [For the lotus (water-lily) as "the root of leaf ornament" in architecture, "founded on this gift of the waves of Nile," and for the "lily capital," see *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. pp. 279–280, 387). The myths and artistic uses of the

82. For consider a little what each of those five tribes* has been to the spirit of man.[1] First, in their nobleness; the Lilies gave the lily of the Annunciation; the Asphodels, the flower of the Elysian fields; the Irids, the fleur-de-lys of chivalry; and the Amaryllids, Christ's lily of the field: while the rush, trodden always under foot, became the emblem of humility. Then take each of the tribes, and consider the extent of their lower influence. Perdita's "The crown imperial, lilies of all kinds,"[2] are the first tribe; which, giving the type of perfect purity in the Madonna's lily, have, by their lovely form, influenced the entire decorative design of Italian sacred art; while ornament of war was continually enriched by the curves of the triple petals of the Florentine "giglio," and French fleur-de-lys; so that it is impossible to count their influence for good in the Middle Ages, partly as a symbol of womanly character, and partly of the utmost brightness and refinement of chivalry in the city which was the flower of cities.

Afterwards, the group of the turban-lilies, or tulips, did some mischief, (their splendid stains having made them the favourite caprice of florists;) but they may be pardoned all such guilt for the pleasure they have given in cottage gardens, and are yet to give, when lowly life may again be possible among us; and the crimson bars of the tulips in their trim beds, with their likeness in crimson bars of morning above them, and its dew glittering heavy, globed in their glossy cups, may be loved better than the grey nettles of

* Take this rough distinction of the four tribes:—Lilies, superior ovary, white seeds; Asphodels, superior ovary, black seeds; Irids, inferior ovary, style (typically) rising into central crest; Amaryllids, inferior ovary, stamens (typically) joined in central cup. Then the rushes are a dark group, through which they stoop to the grasses.

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lily in Christian art and Shakespeare's use of the lily are given by Ruskin below. He here refers also to the lotus of Egypt, of which Plutarch says, "They characterise the rising sun as though it sprang every day afresh out of the lotus-plant; but this implies, that to moisture we owe the first kindling of this luminary" (*De Isid.*, 11). For the large place filled by the lotus in Indian mythology and poetry, see C. Coleman's *Mythology of the Hindus*, 1832, pp. 387–388.]

[1] [With this section compare *Val d'Arno*, § 252 and *n.*]

[2] [*Winter's Tale*, iv. 3, 126: quoted also in *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 32.]

the ash heap, under grey sky, unveined by vermilion or by gold.

88. The next great group, of the Asphodels, divides itself also into two principal families; one, in which the flowers are like stars, and clustered characteristically in balls, though opening sometimes into looser heads; and the other, in which the flowers are in long bells, opening suddenly at the lips, and clustered in spires on a long stem, or drooping from it, when bent by their weight.

The star-group, of the squills, garlics, and onions, has always caused me great wonder. I cannot understand why its beauty, and serviceableness, should have been associated with the rank scent which has been really among the most powerful means of degrading peasant life, and separating it from that of the higher classes.

The belled group, of the hyacinth and convallaria, is as delicate as the other is coarse: the unspeakable azure light along the ground of the wood hyacinth in English spring; the grape hyacinth, which is in South France, as if a cluster of grapes and a hive of honey had been distilled and compressed together into one small boss of celled and beaded blue; the lilies of the valley everywhere, in each sweet and wild recess of rocky land;—count the influences of these on childish and innocent life; then measure the mythic power of the hyacinth and asphodel as connected with Greek thoughts of immortality;[1] finally take their useful and nourishing power in ancient and modern peasant life, and it will be strange if you do not feel what fixed relation exists between the agency of the creating spirit in these, and in us who live by them.

84. It is impossible to bring into any tenable compass for our present purpose, even hints of the human influence of the two remaining orders of Amaryllids and Irids;—only note this generally, that while these in northern countries share with the Primulas the fields of spring, it seems that

[1] [Compare *A Joy for Ever*, § 26 (Vol. XVI. p. 33).]

in Greece, the primulaceæ are not an extended tribe, while the crocus, narcissus, and Amaryllis lutea, the "lily of the field"[1] (I suspect also that the flower whose name we translate "violet" was in truth an Iris[2]) represented to the Greek the first coming of the breath of life on the renewed herbage; and became in his thoughts the true embroidery of the saffron robe[3] of Athena. Later in the year, the dianthus (which, though belonging to an entirely different race of plants, has yet a strange look of having been made out of the grasses by turning the sheath-membrane at the root of their leaves into a flower,) seems to scatter, in multitudinous families, its crimson stars far and wide. But the golden lily and crocus, together with the asphodel, retain always the old Greek's fondest thoughts—they are only "golden" flowers that are to burn on the trees, and float on the streams of paradise.[4]

85. I have but one tribe of plants more to note at our country feast—the savoury herbs; but must go a little out of my way to come at them rightly. All flowers whose petals are fastened together, and most of those whose petals are loose, are best thought of first as a kind of cup or tube opening at the mouth. Sometimes the opening is gradual, as in the convolvulus or campanula; oftener there is a distinct change of direction between the tube and expanding lip, as in the primrose; or even a contraction under the lip, making the tube into a narrow-necked phial or vase, as in the heaths, but the general idea of a tube expanding into a quatrefoil, cinquefoil, or sixfoil, will embrace most of the forms.

86. Now it is easy to conceive that flowers of this kind, growing in close clusters, may, in process of time, have extended their outside petals rather than the interior ones

[1] [Matthew vi. 28.]
[2] [Compare *Laws of Fésole*, ch. vii. § 20 (Vol. XV. p. 426).]
[3] [Compare *ibid.*, ch. vii. § 26 (Vol. XV. p. 427).]
[4] [A reference to the passage in Pindar translated above (§ 50, p. 350), which continues, "golden flowers are glowing, some from the land on trees of splendour, and some the water feedeth, with wreaths whereof they entwine their hands."]

(as the outer flowers of the clusters of many umbellifers actually do), and thus, elongated and variously distorted forms have established themselves; then if the stalk is attached to the side instead of the base of the tube, its base becomes a spur, and thus all the grotesque forms of the mints, violets, and larkspurs, gradually might be composed. But, however this may be, there is one great tribe of plants separate from the rest, and of which the influence seems shed upon the rest in different degrees: and these would give the impression, not so much of having been developed by change, as of being stamped with a character of their own, more or less serpentine or dragon-like. And I think you will find it convenient to call these generally, *Draconidæ;* disregarding their present ugly botanical name,[1] which I do not care even to write once—you may take for their principal types the Foxglove, Snapdragon, and Calceolaria; and you will find they all agree in a tendency to decorate themselves by spots, and with bosses or swollen places in their leaves, as if they had been touched by poison. The spot of the Foxglove is especially strange, because it draws the colour out of the tissue all round it, as if it had been stung, and as if the central colour was really an inflamed spot, with paleness round. Then also they carry to its extreme the decoration by bulging or pouting the petal;—often beautifully used by other flowers in a minor degree, like the beating out of bosses in hollow silver, as in the kalmia, beating out apparently in each petal by the stamens instead of a hammer; or the borage, pouting inwards; but the snapdragons and calceolarias carry it to its extreme.

87. Then the spirit of these Draconidæ seems to pass more or less into other flowers, whose forms are properly pure vases; but it affects some of them slightly,—others not at all. It never strongly affects the heaths; never once the roses; but it enters like an evil spirit into the buttercup, and turns it into a larkspur, with a black, spotted,

[1] [*Scrofulariaceæ.*]

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Erba della Madonna

grotesque centre, and a strange, broken blue, gorgeous and intense, yet impure, glittering on the surface as if it were strewn with broken glass, and stained or darkening irregularly into red. And then at last the serpent charm changes the ranunculus into monkshood; and makes it poisonous. It enters into the forget-me-not, and the star of heavenly turquoise is corrupted into the viper's bugloss, darkened with the same strange red as the larkspur, and fretted into a fringe of thorn; it enters, together with a strange insect-spirit, into the asphodels, and (though with a greater interval between the groups,) they change into spotted orchideæ: it touches the poppy, it becomes a fumaria; the iris, and it pouts into a gladiolus; the lily, and it chequers itself into a snake's-head, and secretes in the deep of its bell drops, not of venom indeed, but honey-dew, as if it were a healing serpent. For there is an Æsculapian as well as an evil serpentry among the Draconidæ, and the fairest of them, the "erba della Madonna" of Venice, (Linaria Cymbalaria,[1]) descends from the ruins it delights in to the herbage at their feet, and touches it; and behold, instantly, a vast group of herbs for healing,—all draconid in form,—spotted, and crested, and from their lip-like corollas named "labiatæ"; full of various balm, and warm strength for healing, yet all of them without splendid honour or perfect beauty, "ground ivies,"[2] richest when crushed under the foot; the best sweetness and gentle brightness of the robes of the field,—thyme, and marjoram, and Euphrasy.

88. And observe, again and again, with respect to all these divisions and powers of plants; it does not matter in the least by what concurrences of circumstance or necessity they may gradually have been developed: the concurrence of circumstance is itself the supreme and inexplicable fact.

[1] [For this plant, the "ivy-leaved toad-flax," see Vol. V. p. 167; Vol. XI. p. 336. Plate XVII. here is from Ruskin's drawing at Oxford, Educational Series, No. 19.]

[2] [The herb ale-hoof (*Nepeta Glechoma*); called "ground ivy" from its creeping stem. Euphrasy is perhaps better known as eyebright.]

We always come at last to a formative cause, which directs the circumstance, and mode of meeting it. If you ask an ordinary botanist the reason of the form of a leaf, he will tell you it is a "developed tubercle," and that its ultimate form "is owing to the direction of its vascular threads." But what directs its vascular threads? "They are seeking for something they want," he will probably answer. What made them want that? What made them seek for it thus? Seek for it, in five fibres or in three? Seek for it, in serration, or in sweeping curves? Seek for it, in servile tendrils, or impetuous spray? Seek for it, in woollen wrinkles rough with stings, or in glossy surfaces, green with pure strength, and winterless delight?

89. There is no answer. But the sum of all is, that over the entire surface of the earth and its waters, as influenced by the power of the air under solar light, there is developed a series of changing forms, in clouds, plants, and animals, all of which have reference in their action, or nature, to the human intelligence that perceives them; and on which, in their aspects of horror and beauty, and their qualities of good and evil, there is engraved a series of myths, or words of the forming power, which, according to the true passion and energy of the human race, they have been enabled to read into religion. And this forming power has been by all nations partly confused with the breath or air through which it acts, and partly understood as a creative wisdom, proceeding from the Supreme Deity; but entering into and inspiring all intelligences that work in harmony with Him. And whatever intellectual results may be in modern days obtained by regarding this effluence only as a motion or vibration, every formative human art hitherto, and the best states of human happiness and order, have depended on the apprehension of its mystery (which is certain), and of its personality (which is probable).

90. Of its influence on the formative arts, I have a few words to say separately: my present business is only to interpret, as we are now sufficiently enabled to do, the

external symbols of the myth under which it was represented by the Greeks as a goddess of counsel, taken first into the breast of their Supreme Deity, then created out of his thoughts, and abiding closely beside him; always sharing and consummating his power.

91. And in doing this we have first to note the meaning of the principal epithet applied to Athena, "Glaukopis,"[1] "with eyes full of light," the first syllable being connected, by its root, with words signifying sight, not with words signifying colour. As far as I can trace the colour perception of the Greeks, I find it all founded primarily on the degree of connection between colour and light;[2] the most important fact to them in the colour of red being its connection with fire and sunshine; so that "purple" is, in its original sense, "fire-colour,"[3] and the scarlet, or orange, of dawn, more than any other, fire-colour. I was long puzzled by Homer's calling the sea purple; and misled into thinking he meant the colour of cloud shadows on green sea;[4] whereas he really means the gleaming blaze of the waves under wide light. Aristotle's idea (partly true) is that light, subdued by blackness, becomes red;[5] and blackness heated or lighted, also becomes red. Thus, a colour may be called purple because it is light subdued (and so death is called "purple" or "shadowy" death); or else it may be called purple as being shade kindled with fire, and thus said of the lighted sea; or even of the sun itself, when it is thought of as a red luminary opposed to the whiteness of the moon: "purpureos inter soles, et candida lunæ sidera";[6] or of golden hair: "pro purpureo pœnam solvens scelerata capillo";[7] while both ideas are modified

[1] [Compare § 15 (above, p. 306).]

[2] [For another passage dealing with "the strong impressions of the power of light" in the Greeks, see *Lectures on Art*, §§ 151 *seq.*]

[3] [See above, pp. 313, 330.]

[4] [See the "Addresses on Decorative Colour" (1854), § 38, where this explanation was given (Vol. XII. p. 505).]

[5] [*De Coloribus*, ch. iii.; compare Vol. VII. p. 159.]

[6] [Virgil: *Ciris*, 37.]

[7] [Ruskin quotes from memory, and combines *Georgics*, i. 405 ("et pro purpureo pœnas dat Scylla capillo") with *Æneid*, ii. 576 ("sceleratas sumere pœnas").]

by the influence of an earlier form of the word, which has nothing to do with fire at all, but only with mixing or staining;[1] and then, to make the whole group of thoughts inextricably complex, yet rich and subtle in proportion to their intricacy, the various rose and crimson colours of the murex-dye,—the crimson and purple of the poppy, and fruit of the palm—and the association of all these with the hue of blood;—partly direct, partly through a confusion between the word signifying "slaughter" and "palm-fruit colour,"[2] mingle themselves in, and renew the whole nature of the old word; so that, in later literature, it means a different colour, or emotion of colour, in almost every place where it occurs: and casts around for ever the reflection of all that has been dipped in its dyes.

92. So that the word is really a liquid prism, and stream of opal. And then, last of all, to keep the whole history of it in the fantastic course of a dream, warped here and there into wild grotesque, we moderns, who have preferred to rule over coal-mines instead of the sea (and so have turned the everlasting lamp of Athena into a Davy's safety-lamp in the hand of Britannia, and Athenian heavenly lightning into British subterranean "damp"), have actually got our purple out of coal instead of the sea! And thus, grotesquely, we have had enforced on us the doubt that held the old word between blackness and fire, and have completed the shadow, and the fear of it, by giving it a name from battle, "Magenta."[3]

93. There is precisely a similar confusion between light and colour in the word used for the blue of the eyes of Athena—a noble confusion, however, brought about by the intensity of the Greek sense that the heaven is light, more than that it is blue. I was not thinking of this when I

[1] [By "an earlier form of the word," Ruskin seems to mean that originally the word πορφύρω was a reduplicated form of φύρω (to mix): see Liddell and Scott.]

[2] [φονή and φοινίκεος, purple (from φόως): see Liddell and Scott under the latter word. Compare also *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 7, where Ruskin connects the word further with "phœnix or flamingo colour."]

[3] [The aniline dye, first so called, was discovered shortly after the date of the battle (1859).]

wrote, in speaking of pictorial chiaroscuro, "The sky is not blue colour merely: it is blue fire, and cannot be painted" (*Mod. P.*, iv. p. 86[1]); but it was this that the Greeks chiefly felt of it, and so "Glaukopis" chiefly means grey-eyed: grey standing for a pale or luminous blue; but it only means "owl-eyed" in thought of the roundness and expansion, not from the colour; this breadth and brightness being, again, in their moral sense, typical of the breadth, intensity, and singleness of the sight in prudence ("if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light"[2]). Then the actual power of the bird to see in twilight enters into the type, and perhaps its general fineness of sense. "Before the human form was adopted, her (Athena's) proper symbol was the owl, a bird which seems to surpass all other creatures in acuteness of organic perception, its eye being calculated to observe objects which to all others are enveloped in darkness, its ear to hear sounds distinctly, and its nostrils to discriminate effluvia with such nicety that it has been deemed prophetic, from discovering the putridity of death even in the first stages of disease."*

I cannot find anywhere an account of the first known occurrence of the type; but, in the early ones on Attic coins, the wide round eyes are clearly the principal things to be made manifest.

94. There is yet, however, another colour of great importance in the conception of Athena—the dark blue of her ægis. Just as the blue or grey of her eyes was conceived as more light than colour, so her ægis was dark blue, because the Greeks thought of this tint more as shade than colour, and, while they used various materials in ornamentation, lapis-lazuli, carbonate of copper, or perhaps, smalt, with real enjoyment of the blue tint, it was yet in

* Payne Knight, in his *Inquiry into the Symbolical Language of Ancient Art* [1818], not trustworthy, being little more than a mass of conjectural memoranda, but the heap is suggestive, if well sifted.

[1] [Part v. ch. iii. § 3; see now Vol. VI. p. 51.]
[2] [Matthew vi. 22.]

their minds as distinctly representative of darkness as scarlet was of light, and, therefore, anything dark,* but especially the colour of heavy thundercloud, was described by the same term. The physical power of this darkness of the ægis, fringed with lightning, is given quite simply when Jupiter himself uses it to overshadow Ida and the Plain of Troy, and withdraws it at the prayer of Ajax for light;[1] and again when he grants it to be worn for a time by Apollo, who is hidden by its cloud when he strikes down Patroclus:[2] but its spiritual power is chiefly expressed by a word signifying deeper shadow;—the gloom of Erebus, or of our evening, which, when spoken of the ægis, signifies not merely the indignation of Athena, but the entire hiding or withdrawal of her help, and beyond even this, her deadliest of all hostility—the darkness by which she herself deceives and beguiles to final ruin those to whom she is

* In the breastplate and shield of Atrides the serpents and bosses are all of this dark colour, yet the serpents are said to be like rainbows;[3] but through all this splendour and opposition of hue, I feel distinctly that the literal "splendour," with its relative shade, are prevalent in the conception; and that there is always a tendency to look through the hue to its cause. And in this feeling about colour the Greeks are separated from the Eastern nations, and from the best designers of Christian times. I cannot find that they take pleasure in colour for its own sake; it may be in something more than colour, or better; but it is not in the hue itself. When Homer describes cloud breaking from a mountain summit the crags became visible in light, not in colour; he feels only their flashing out in bright edges and trenchant shadows: above, the "infinite," "unspeakable" æther is torn open—but not the *blue* of it.[4] He has scarcely any abstract pleasure in blue, or green, or gold; but only in their shade or flame.

I have yet to trace the causes of this (which will be a long task, belonging to art questions, not to mythological ones);[5] but it is, I believe, much connected with the brooding of the shadow of death over the Greeks, without any clear hope of immortality. The restriction of the

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[1] [*Iliad*, xvii. 593, 594, 626 *seq.*]
[2] [*Ibid.*, xvi. 777 *seq.*]
[3] [*Ibid.*, xi. 24 *seq.*]
[4] [*Ibid.*, xvi. 297–300: "As when from the high crest of a great hill, Zeus, the gatherer of the lightning, has stirred a dense cloud, and all the peaks, and sharp promontories, and glades shine forth, and from heaven the infinite air breaks open."]
[5] [See *Lectures on Art*, Lectures vi. and vii., and compare *Art of England*, § 52.]

wholly adverse; this contradiction of her own glory being the uttermost judgment upon human falsehood. Thus it is she who provokes Pandarus to the treachery which purposed to fulfil the rape of Helen by the murder of her husband in time of truce; and *then* the Greek King, holding his wounded brother's hand, prophesies against Troy the darkness of the ægis which shall be over all, and for ever.*

95. This, then, finally, was the perfect colour-conception of Athena;—the flesh, snow-white, (the hands, feet, and face of marble, even when the statue was hewn roughly in wood); the eyes of keen pale blue, often in statues represented by jewels; the long robe to the feet, crocus-coloured; and the ægis thrown over it of thunderous purple; the helmet golden, (*Il.*, v. 144,) and I suppose its crest also, as that of Achilles.[1]

If you think carefully of the meaning and character

colour on their vases to dim red (or yellow) with black and white, is greatly connected with their sepulchral use, and with all the melancholy of Greek tragic thought; and in this gloom the failure of colour-perception is partly noble, partly base: noble, in its earnestness, which raises the design of Greek vases as far above the designing of mere colourist nations like the Chinese, as men's thoughts are above children's; and yet it is partly base and earthly; and inherently defective in one human faculty: and I believe it was one cause of the perishing of their art so swiftly, for indeed there is no decline so sudden, or down to such utter loss and ludicrous depravity, as the fall of Greek design on its vases from the fifth to the third century, B.C. On the other hand, the pure colour-gift, when employed for pleasure only, degrades in another direction; so that among the Indians, Chinese, and Japanese,[2] all intellectual progress in art has been for ages rendered impossible by the prevalence of that faculty: and yet it is, as I have said again and again,[3] the spiritual power of art; and its true brightness is the essential characteristic of all healthy schools.

* ἐρεμνὴν Αἰγίδα πᾶσι.—*Il.*, iv. 166.

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[1] [*Iliad*, xviii. 611.]

[2] [For Ruskin's views on Japanese art, see *Time and Tide*, § 26 (Vol. XVII. p. 340); and for Indian art, *Two Paths*, § 3 (Vol. XVI. p. 261). In *Lectures on Art*, § 158, referring to the present page, Ruskin explains that the Indian and Chinese schools of art were "content to obtain beautiful harmonies of colour without any representation of light."]

[3] [See, for instance, *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 194); and vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 417).]

which is now enough illustrated for you in each of these colours; and remember that the crocus-colour and the purple were both of them developments, in opposite directions, of the great central idea of fire-colour, or scarlet, you will see that this form of the creative spirit of the earth is conceived as robed in the blue, and purple, and scarlet, the white, and the gold, which have been recognized for the sacred chord of colours, from the day when the cloud descended on a Rock more mighty than Ida.[1]

96. I have spoken throughout, hitherto, of the conception of Athena, as it is traceable in the Greek mind; not as it was rendered by Greek art. It is matter of extreme difficulty, requiring a sympathy at once affectionate and cautious, and a knowledge reaching the earliest springs of the religion of many lands, to discern through the imperfection, and alas! more dimly yet, through the triumphs, of formative art, what kind of thoughts they were that appointed for it the tasks of its childhood, and watched by the awakening of its strength.[2]

The religious passion is nearly always vividest when the art is weakest; and the technical skill reaches its deliberate splendour only when the ecstasy which gave it birth has passed away for ever. It is as vain an attempt to reason out the visionary power or guiding influence of Athena in the Greek heart, from anything we now read, or possess, of the work of Phidias, as it would be for the disciples of some new religion to infer the spirit of Christianity from Titian's "Assumption." The effective vitality of the religious conception can be traced only through the efforts of trembling hands, and strange pleasures of untaught eyes; and the beauty of the dream can no more be found in the

[1] [See Exodus xxiv. 18, xxv. 1–4: "And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount. . . . And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering. . . . And blue, and purple, and scarlet." Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 197).]

[2] [See the *Art of England*, § 43, for a reference to "the erroneous idea" that the nature of myths may be "conclusively ascertained by the types which early art presents of them."]

first symbols by which it is expressed, than a child's idea of fairyland can be gathered from its pencil scrawl, or a girl's love for her broken doll explained by the defaced features. On the other hand, the Athena of Phidias was, in very fact, not so much the deity, as the darling of the Athenian people. Her magnificence represented their pride and fondness, more than their piety; and the great artist, in lavishing upon her dignities which might be ended abruptly by the pillage they provoked, resigned, apparently without regret, the awe of her ancient memory; and, (with only the careless remonstrance of a workman too strong to be proud,) even the perfectness of his own art. Rejoicing in the protection of their goddess, and in their own hour of glory, the people of Athena robed her, at their will, with the preciousness of ivory and gems; forgot or denied the darkness of the breastplate of judgment, and vainly bade its unappeasable serpents relax their coils in gold.

97. It will take me many a day yet—if days, many or few, be given me—to disentangle in anywise the proud and practised disguises of religious creeds from the instinctive arts which, grotesquely and indecorously, yet with sincerity, strove to embody them, or to relate. But I think the reader, by help even of the imperfect indications already given to him, will be able to follow, with a continually increasing security, the vestiges of the Myth of Athena; and to reanimate its almost evanescent shade, by connecting it with the now recognized facts of existent nature, which it, more or less dimly, reflected and foretold. I gather these facts together in brief sum.

98. The deep of air that surrounds the earth enters into union with the earth at its surface, and with its waters; so as to be the apparent cause of their ascending into life. First, it warms them, and shades, at once, staying the heat of the sun's rays in its own body, but warding their force with its clouds. It warms and cools at once, with traffic of balm and frost; so that the white wreaths are withdrawn from the field of the Swiss peasant

by the glow of Libyan rock. It gives its own strength to the sea; forms and fills every cell of its foam; sustains the precipices, and designs the valleys of its waves; gives the gleam to their moving under the night, and the white fire to their plains under sunrise; lifts their voices along the rocks, bears above them the spray of birds, pencils through them the dimpling of unfooted sands. It gathers out of them a portion in the hollow of its hand: dyes, with that, the hills into dark blue, and their glaciers with dying rose; inlays with that, for sapphire, the dome in which it has to set the cloud; shapes out of that the heavenly flocks: divides them, numbers, cherishes, bears them on its bosom, calls them to their journeys, waits by their rest; feeds from them the brooks that cease not, and strews with them the dews that cease. It spins and weaves their fleece into wild tapestry, rends it, and renews; and flits and flames, and whispers, among the golden threads, thrilling them with a plectrum of strange fire that traverses them to and fro, and is enclosed in them like life.

It enters into the surface of the earth, subdues it, and falls together with it into fruitful dust, from which can be moulded flesh; it joins itself, in dew, to the substance of adamant; and becomes the green leaf out of the dry ground; it enters into the separated shapes of the earth it has tempered, commands the ebb and flow of the current of their life, fills their limbs with its own lightness, measures their existence by its indwelling pulse, moulds upon their lips the words by which one soul can be known to another; is to them the hearing of the ear, and the beating of the heart; and, passing away, leaves them to the peace that hears and moves no more.

99. This was the Athena of the greatest people of the days of old. And opposite to the temple of this Spirit of the breath, and life-blood, of man and of beast, stood, on the Mount of Justice, and near the chasm which was haunted by the goddess-Avengers, an altar to a God unknown;—proclaimed at last to them, as one who, indeed,

gave to all men, life, and breath, and all things; and rain from heaven, filling their hearts with food and gladness;—a God who had made of one blood all nations of men who dwell on the face of all the earth, and had determined the times of their fate, and the bounds of their habitation.[1]

100. We ourselves, fretted here in our narrow days, know less, perhaps, in very deed, than they, what manner of spirit we are of, or what manner of spirit we ignorantly worship.[2] Have we, indeed, desired the Desire of all nations? and will the Master whom we meant to seek, and the Messenger in whom we thought we delighted, confirm, when He comes to His temple,—or not find in its midst,—the tables heavy with gold for bread, and the seats that are bought with the price of the dove? Or is our own land also to be left by its angered Spirit;—left among those, where sunshine vainly sweet, and passionate folly of storm, waste themselves in the silent places of knowledge that has passed away, and of tongues that have ceased?

This only we may discern assuredly: this, every true light of science, every mercifully-granted power, every wisely-restricted thought, teach us more clearly day by day, that in the heavens above, and the earth beneath, there is one continual and omnipotent presence of help, and of peace, for all men who know that they Live, and remember that they Die.

[1] [The reference is to the preaching of St. Paul on the Areopagus at Athens, opposite to the Acropolis, and close to the cave of the Eumenides; where stood "an altar with this inscription, To the Unknown God" (Acts xvii. 19, 23, 25, 26, xiv. 17).]

[2] [For the Bible references here, see Acts xvii. 23; Haggai ii. 7; Malachi iii. 1; Matthew xxi. 12.]

III

ATHENA ERGANE*

(*Athena in the Heart*)

Various Notes relating to the Conception of Athena as the Directress of the Imagination and Will

101. I HAVE now only a few words to say, bearing on what seems to me present need, respecting the third function of Athena, conceived as the directress of human passion, resolution, and labour.

Few words, for I am not yet prepared to give accurate distinction between the intellectual rule of Athena and that of the Muses: but, broadly, the Muses, with their king, preside over meditative, historical, and poetic arts, whose end is the discovery of light or truth, and the creation of beauty: but Athena rules over moral passion, and practically useful art. She does not make men learned, but prudent and subtle: she does not teach them to make their work beautiful, but to make it right.[1]

In different places of my writings, and through many years of endeavour to define the laws of art, I have insisted on this rightness in work, and on its connection with virtue of character, in so many partial ways, that the impression left on the reader's mind—if, indeed, it was ever impressed

* "Athena the worker, or having rule over work." The name was first given to her by the Athenians.[2]

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[1] [See § 169, below, p. 414.]

[2] [Pausanias, i. 24, 3: "I observed before that the zeal of the Athenians in matters of religion exceeds that of all other peoples. Thus they were the first to give Athena the surname of the Worker," etc.]

at all—has been confused and uncertain. In beginning the series of my corrected works,[1] I wish this principle (in my own mind the foundation of every other) to be made plain, if nothing else is: and will try, therefore, to make it so, as far as, by any effort, I can put it into unmistakable words. And, first, here is a very simple statement of it, given lately in a lecture on the Architecture of the Valley of the Somme, which will be better read in this place than in its incidental connection with my account of the porches of Abbeville.[2]

102. I had used, in a preceding part of the lecture, the expression, "by what faults" this Gothic architecture fell. We continually speak thus of works of art. We talk of their faults and merits, as of virtues and vices. What do we mean by talking of the faults of a picture, or the merits of a piece of stone?

The faults of a work of art are the faults of its workman, and its virtues his virtues.

Great art is the expression of the mind of a great man, and mean art, that of the want of mind of a weak man. A foolish person builds foolishly, and a wise one, sensibly; a virtuous one, beautifully; and a vicious one, basely. If stone work is well put together, it means that a thoughtful man planned it, and a careful man cut it, and an honest man cemented it. If it has too much ornament, it means that its carver was too greedy of pleasure; if too little, that he was rude, or insensitive, or stupid, and the like. So that when once you have learned how to spell these most precious of all legends,—pictures and buildings,—you may read the characters of men, and of nations, in their art, as in a mirror;—nay, as in a microscope, and magnified a

[1] [*The Queen of the Air* was intended, it will thus be seen, to be the first volume in a new series of the author's works. His appointment shortly afterwards to the Slade Professorship at Oxford interfered with the plan; which, however, was resumed in 1871, when the "Works" Series, headed by *Sesame and Lilies*, began to appear: see Vol. XVIII. pp. 9, 31.]

[2] [See § 7 of the lecture; above, p. 248. The lecture read: "And, first, I have just used the expression—by what faults it fell. We continually speak," etc. The passage from the lecture ends with the end of § 105 here.]

hundredfold; for the character becomes passionate in the art, and intensifies itself in all its noblest or meanest delights. Nay, not only as in a microscope, but as under a scalpel, and in dissection; for a man may hide himself from you, or misrepresent himself to you, every other way; but he cannot in his work: there, be sure, you have him to the inmost. All that he likes, all that he sees,—all that he can do,—his imagination, his affections, his perseverance, his impatience, his clumsiness, cleverness, everything is there. If the work is a cobweb, you know it was made by a spider; if a honeycomb, by a bee; a worm-cast is thrown up by a worm, and a nest wreathed by a bird; and a house built by a man, worthily, if he is worthy, and ignobly, if he is ignoble.

And always, from the least to the greatest, as the made thing is good or bad, so is the maker of it.

108. You all use this faculty of judgment more or less, whether you theoretically admit the principle or not. Take that floral gable;* you don't suppose the man who built Stonehenge could have built that, or that the man who built that, *would* have built Stonehenge? Do you think an old Roman would have liked such a piece of filigree work? or that Michael Angelo would have spent his time in twisting these stems of roses in and out? Or, of modern handicraftsmen, do you think a burglar, or a brute, or a pickpocket could have carved it? Could Bill Sykes have done it? or the Dodger, dexterous with finger and tool? You will find in the end, that *no man could have done it but exactly the man who did it;* and by looking close at it, you may, if you know your letters, read precisely the manner of man he was.

* The elaborate pediment above the central porch at the west end of Rouen Cathedral, pierced into a transparent web of tracery, and enriched with a border of "twisted eglantine."[1]

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[1] [*L'Allegro*, 48. A drawing of the west front of Rouen was No. 49 in the Catalogue of examples illustrating the Abbeville lecture: see above, p. 277.]

104. Now I must insist on this matter, for a grave reason. Of all facts concerning art, this is the one most necessary to be known, that, while manufacture is the work of hands only, art is the work of the whole spirit of man;[1] and as that spirit is, so is the deed of it: and by whatever power of vice or virtue any art is produced, the same vice or virtue it reproduces and teaches. That which is born of evil begets evil; and that which is born of valour and honour, teaches valour and honour. All art is either infection or education. It *must* be one or other of these.

105. This, I repeat, of all truths respecting art, is the one of which understanding is the most precious, and denial the most deadly. And I assert it the more, because it has of late been repeatedly, expressly, and with contumely denied; and that by high authority:[2] and I hold it one of the most sorrowful facts connected with the decline of the arts among us, that English gentlemen, of high standing as scholars and artists, should have been blinded into the acceptance, and betrayed into the assertion of a fallacy which only authority such as theirs could have rendered for an instant credible. For the contrary of it is written in the history of all great nations; it is the one sentence always inscribed on the steps of their thrones; the one concordant voice in which they speak to us out of their dust.

All such nations first manifest themselves as a pure and beautiful animal race, with intense energy and imagination. They live lives of hardship by choice, and by grand instinct of manly discipline: they become fierce and irresistible soldiers; the nation is always its own army, and their king, or chief head of government, is always their first soldier. Pharaoh, or David, or Leonidas, or Valerius, or Barbarossa, or Cœur de Lion, or S. Louis, or Dandolo,

[1] [Compare *Two Paths*, § 52 (Vol. XVI. p. 294); and below, p. 463.]
[2] [See, for instance, the discussion at the Royal Institute of British Architects; above, p. 40.]

or Frederick the Great:[1]—Egyptian, Jew, Greek, Roman, German, English, French, Venetian,—that is inviolable law for them all; their king must be their first soldier,[2] or they cannot be in progressive power. Then, after their great military period, comes the domestic period;[3] in which, without betraying the discipline of war, they add to their great soldiership the delights and possessions of a delicate and tender home-life: and then, for all nations, is the time of their perfect art, which is the fruit, the evidence, the reward of their national ideal of character, developed by the finished care of the occupations of peace. That is the history of all true art that ever was, or can be: palpably the history of it,—unmistakably,—written on the forehead of it in letters of light,—in tongues of fire, by which the seal of virtue is branded as deep as ever iron burnt into a convict's flesh the seal of crime. But always, hitherto, after the great period, has followed the day of luxury, and pursuit of the arts for pleasure only. And all has so ended.

106. Thus far of Abbeville building. Now I have here asserted two things,—first, the foundation of art in moral character; next, the foundation of moral character in war. I must make both these assertions clearer, and prove them.

First, of the foundation of art in moral character.[4] Of course art-gift and amiability of disposition are two different things; a good man is not necessarily a painter, nor does an eye for colour necessarily imply an honest mind. But great art implies the union of both powers: it is the expression, by an art-gift, of a pure soul. If the gift is not

[1] [For other references to these types of the hero as king or chieftain, see, for Leonidas, Vol. VII. p. 231 and Vol. IX. p. 446; for Valerius, above, p. 102; for Barbarossa, *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 84 *seq.*; for Cœur de Lion, Vol. XI. p. 79; for St. Louis, Vol. V. p. 416 and Vol. XII. p. 138; for Dandolo, Vol. IX. p. 20 *n.*, and Vol. XVIII. p. 463; and for Frederick the Great, Vol. XVIII. p. 516.]

[2] [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 91, 163 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 463, 516).]

[3] [Compare *ibid.*, § 91 (Vol. XVIII. p. 462).]

[4] [On this point compare (among other passages) *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 210–211); vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 65–66); *Two Paths*, § 66 (Vol. XVI. p. 310); *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 54 (Vol. XVIII. p. 434); and *Lectures on Art*, §§ 9, 27, 33, 66–68, 71, 77, 95. And in this volume see the lecture on "The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts."]

there, we can have no art at all; and if the soul—and a right soul too—is not there, the art is bad, however dexterous.

107. But also, remember, that the art-gift itself is only the result of the moral character of generations.[1] A bad woman may have a sweet voice; but that sweetness of voice comes of the past morality of her race. That she can sing with it at all, she owes to the determination of laws of music by the morality of the past. Every act, every impulse, of virtue and vice, affects in any creature, face, voice, nervous power, and vigour and harmony of invention, at once. Perseverance in rightness of human conduct, renders, after a certain number of generations, human art possible; every sin clouds it, be it ever so little a one; and persistent vicious living and following of pleasure render, after a certain number of generations, all art impossible. Men are deceived by the long-suffering of the laws of nature; and mistake, in a nation, the reward of the virtue of its sires for the issue of its own sins. The time of their visitation will come, and that inevitably; for, it is always true, that if the fathers have eaten sour grapes, the children's teeth are set on edge.[2] And for the individual, as soon as you have learned to read, you may, as I have said, know him to the heart's core, through his art. Let his art-gift be never so great, and cultivated to the height by the schools of a great race of men; and it is still but a tapestry thrown over his own being and inner soul; and the bearing of it will show, infallibly, whether it hangs on a man, or on a skeleton. If you are dim-eyed, you may not see the difference in the fall of the folds at first, but learn how to look, and the folds themselves will become transparent, and you shall see through them the death's shape, or the divine one, making the tissue above it as a cloud of light, or as a winding-sheet.

[1] [This also is a point constantly enforced by Ruskin: see, for instance, "The Study of Architecture," § 3 (above, p. 23); and the Preface to *St. Mark's Rest.*]

[2] [Jeremiah xxxi. 29.]

108. Then farther, observe, I have said[1] (and you will find it true, and that to the uttermost) that, as all lovely art is rooted in virtue, so it bears fruit of virtue, and is didactic in its own nature. It is often didactic also in actually expressed thought, as Giotto's, Michael Angelo's, Dürer's, and hundreds more; but that is not its special function,—it is didactic chiefly by being beautiful; but beautiful with haunting thought, no less than with form, and full of myths that can be read only with the heart.

For instance, at this moment there is open beside me as I write, a page of Persian manuscript, wrought with wreathed azure and gold, and soft green, and violet, and ruby and scarlet, into one field of pure resplendence.[2] It is wrought to delight the eyes only; and it does delight them; and the man who did it assuredly had eyes in his head; but not much more. It is not didactic art, but its author was happy: and it will do the good, and the harm, that mere pleasure can do. But, opposite me,[3] is an early Turner drawing of the lake of Geneva, taken about two miles from Geneva, on the Lausanne road, with Mont Blanc in the distance. The old city is seen lying beyond the waveless waters, veiled with a sweet misty veil of Athena's weaving: a faint light of morning, peaceful exceedingly, and almost colourless, shed from behind the Voirons, increases into soft amber along the slope of the Salève, and is just seen, and no more, on the fair warm fields of its summit, between the folds of a white cloud that rests upon the grass, but rises, high and towerlike, into the zenith of dawn above.

109. There is not as much colour in that low amber light upon the hill-side as there is in the palest dead leaf. The lake is not blue, but grey in mist, passing into deep shadow beneath the Voirons' pines; a few dark clusters of

[1] [See above, § 17, p. 307.]

[2] [Now in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford.]

[3] [In his study at Denmark Hill: see "Instructions in Use of Rudimentary Series," § 2 (Vol. XX.), where he again refers to the drawing, for which see Vol. XIII. p. 458.]

leaves, a single white flower—scarcely seen—are all the gladness given to the rocks of the shore. One of the ruby spots of the eastern manuscript would give colour enough for all the red that is in Turner's entire drawing. For the mere pleasure of the eye, there is not so much in all those lines of his, throughout the entire landscape, as in half an inch square of the Persian's page. What made him take pleasure in the low colour that is only like the brown of a dead leaf? in the cold grey of dawn—in the one white flower among the rocks—in these—and no more than these?

110. He took pleasure in them because he had been bred among English fields and hills; because the gentleness of a great race was in his heart, and its power of thought in his brain; because he knew the stories of the Alps, and of the cities at their feet; because he had read the Homeric legends of the clouds, and beheld the gods of dawn, and the givers of dew to the fields; because he knew the faces of the crags, and the imagery of the passionate mountains, as a man knows the face of his friend; because he had in him the wonder and sorrow concerning life and death, which are the inheritance of the Gothic soul from the days of its first sea kings; and also the compassion and the joy that are woven into the innermost fabric of every great imaginative spirit, born now in countries that have lived by the Christian faith with any courage or truth. And the picture contains also, for us, just this which its maker had in him to give; and can convey it to us, just so far as we are of the temper in which it must be received. It is didactic, if we are worthy to be taught, no otherwise. The pure heart, it will make more pure; the thoughtful, more thoughtful. It has in it no words for the reckless or the base.

111. As I myself look at it, there is no fault nor folly of my life,—and both have been many and great,—that does not rise up against me, and take away my joy, and shorten my power of possession, of sight, of understanding.

And every past effort of my life, every gleam of rightness or good in it, is with me now, to help me in my grasp of this art, and its vision. So far as I can rejoice in, or interpret either, my power is owing to what of right there is in me. I dare to say it, that, because through all my life I have desired good, and not evil; because I have been kind to many; have wished to be kind to all; have wilfully injured none; and because I have loved much, and not selfishly;[1]—therefore, the morning light is yet visible to me on those hills, and you, who read, may trust my thought and word in such work as I have to do for you; and you will be glad afterwards that you have trusted them.

112. Yet remember,—I repeat it again and yet again,—that I may for once, if possible, make this thing assuredly clear:—the inherited art-gift must be there, as well as the life in some poor measure, or rescued fragment, right. This art-gift of mine could not have been won by any work, or by any conduct; it belongs to me by birthright, and came by Athena's will, from the air of English country villages, and Scottish hills. I will risk whatever charge of folly may come on me, for printing one of my many childish rhymes, written on a frosty day in Glen Farg, just north of Loch Leven.[2] It bears date 1st January, 1828. I was born on the 8th of February, 1819; and all that I ever could be, and all that I cannot be, the weak little rhyme already shows.

> "Papa, how pretty those icicles are,
> That are seen so near,—that are seen so far;
> —Those dropping waters that come from the rocks
> And many a hole, like the haunt of a fox.
> That silvery stream that runs babbling along,
> Making a murmuring, dancing song.
> Those trees that stand waving upon the rock's side,
> And men, that, like spectres, among them glide.

[1] [Compare Ruskin's reply to a charge of "sentimentality" in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 41.]

[2] [See Vol. II. p. 262.]

And waterfalls that are heard from far,
And come in sight when very near.
And the water-wheel that turns slowly round,
Grinding the corn that—requires to be ground,—

(Political Economy of the future!)

——And mountains at a distance seen,
And rivers winding through the plain.
And quarries with their craggy stones,
And the wind among them moans."

So foretelling Stones of Venice, and this essay on Athena.

Enough now concerning myself.

118. Of Turner's life, and of its good and evil, both great, but the good immeasurably the greater, his work is in all things a perfect and transparent evidence. His biography is simply,—"He did this, nor will ever another do its like again." Yet read what I have said of him, as compared with the great Italians, in the passages taken from the *Cestus of Aglaia*, farther on, § 158.[1]

114. This, then, is the nature of the connection of morals with art. Now, secondly, I have asserted the foundation of both these, at least, hitherto, in war. The reason of this too manifest fact is, that, until now, it has been impossible for any nation, except a warrior one, to fix its mind wholly on its men, instead of on their possessions. Every great soldier nation thinks, necessarily, first of multiplying its bodies and souls of men, in good temper and strict discipline. As long as this is its political aim, it does not matter what it temporarily suffers, or loses, either in numbers or in wealth; its morality and its arts, (if it have national art-gift,) advance together; but so soon as it ceases to be a warrior nation, it thinks of its possessions instead of its men; and then the moral and poetic powers vanish together.

115. It is thus, however, absolutely necessary to the virtue of war that it should be waged by personal strength,

[1] [Now to be read in their original place; see above, pp. 131, 132.]

not by money or machinery.[1] A nation that fights with a mercenary force, or with torpedoes instead of its own arms, is dying. Not but that there is more true courage in modern than even in ancient war; but this is, first, because all the remaining life of European nations is with a morbid intensity thrown into their soldiers; and, secondly, because their present heroism is the culmination of centuries of inbred and traditional valour, which Athena taught them by forcing them to govern the foam of the sea-wave and of the horse,—not the steam of kettles.

116. And farther, note this, which is vital to us in the present crisis: If war is to be made by money and machinery, the nation which is the largest and most covetous multitude will win. You may be as scientific as you choose; the mob that can pay more for sulphuric acid and gunpowder will at last poison its bullets, throw acid in your faces, and make an end of you;—of itself, also, in good time, but of you first. And to the English people the choice of its fate is very near now.[2] It may spasmodically defend its property with iron walls a fathom thick, a few years longer—a very few. No walls will defend either it, or its havings, against the multitude that is breeding and spreading, faster than the clouds, over the habitable earth. We shall be allowed to live by small pedlar's business, and ironmongery—since we have chosen those for our line of life—as long as we are found useful black servants to the Americans; and are content to dig coals and sit in the cinders; and have still coals to dig,—they once exhausted, or got cheaper elsewhere, we shall be abolished. But if we think more wisely, while there is yet time, and set our minds again on multiplying Englishmen, and not on cheapening English wares; if we resolve to submit to wholesome laws of labour and economy, and, setting our political squabbles aside, try how many strong creatures,

[1] [On this point compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 103 (Vol. XVIII. p. 472).]
[2] [Compare Vol. XVII. p. 110 *n.*]

friendly and faithful to each other, we can crowd into every spot of English dominion, neither poison nor iron will prevail against us; nor traffic—nor hatred: the noble nation will yet, by the grace of Heaven, rule over the ignoble, and force of heart hold its own against fire-balls.

117. But there is yet a farther reason for the dependence of the arts on war. The vice and injustice of the world are constantly springing anew, and are only to be subdued by battle; the keepers of order and law must always be soldiers. And now, going back to the myth of Athena, we see that though she is first a warrior maid, she detests war for its own sake; she arms Achilles and Ulysses in just quarrels, but she *dis*arms Ares. She contends, herself, continually against disorder and convulsion in the Earth giants; she stands by Hercules' side in victory over all monstrous evil: in justice only she judges and makes war.[1] But in this war of hers she is wholly implacable. She has little notion of converting criminals. There is no faculty of mercy in her when she has been resisted. Her word is only, "I will mock when your fear cometh."[2] Note the words that follow: "when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind;" for her wrath is of irresistible tempest: once roused, it is blind and deaf,—rabies—madness of anger—darkness of the Dies Iræ.

And that is, indeed, the sorrowfullest fact we have to know about our own several lives. Wisdom never forgives. Whatever resistance we have offered to her law, she avenges for ever;—the lost hour can never be redeemed, and the accomplished wrong never atoned for. The best that can be done afterwards, but for that, had been better; —the falsest of all the cries of peace, where there is no peace, is that of the pardon of sin, as the mob expect it. Wisdom can "put away" sin,[3] but she cannot pardon it;

[1] [Revelation xix. 11: compare Vol. XVIII. p. 493.]
[2] [Proverbs i. 26, 27.]
[3] [Hebrews ix. 26.]

and she is apt, in her haste, to put away the sinner as well, when the black ægis is on her breast.

118. And this is also a fact we have to know about our national life, that it is ended as soon as it has lost the power of noble Anger.[1] When it paints over, and apologizes for its pitiful criminalities; and endures its false weights, and its adulterated food;[2] dares not decide practically between good and evil, and can neither honour the one, nor smite the other, but sneers at the good, as if it were hidden evil, and consoles the evil with pious sympathy, and conserves it in the sugar of its leaden heart,—the end is come.

119. The first sign, then, of Athena's presence with any people, is that they become warriors, and that the chief thought of every man of them is to stand rightly in his rank, and not fail from his brother's side in battle. Wealth, and pleasure, and even love, are all, under Athena's orders, sacrificed to this duty of standing fast in the rank of war.

But farther: Athena presided over industry, as well as battle; typically, over women's industry; that brings comfort with pleasantness.[3] Her word to us all is:—"Be well exercised, and rightly clothed. Clothed, and in your right minds;[4] not insane and in rags, nor in soiled fine clothes clutched from each other's shoulders.[5] Fight and weave. Then I myself will answer for the course of the lance, and the colours of the loom."

And now I will ask the reader to look with some care through these following passages respecting modern multitudes and their occupations, written long ago, but left in fragmentary form, in which they must now stay, and be of what use they can.

120. It is not political economy to put a number of

[1] [On noble anger, compare *Lectures on Art*, § 39.]
[2] [On the subject of adulteration, see *Time and Tide*, § 76 and *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 383).]
[3] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 130 (Vol. XVIII. p. 176).]
[4] [Mark v. 15.]
[5] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 36 *n.* (Vol. XVIII. p. 91 *n.*).]

strong men down on an acre of ground, with no lodging, and nothing to eat. Nor is it political economy to build a city on good ground, and fill it with store of corn and treasure, and put a score of lepers to live in it. Political economy creates together the means of life, and the living persons who are to use them; and of both, the best and the most that it can, but imperatively the best, not the most. A few good and healthy men, rather than a multitude of diseased rogues; and a little real milk and wine rather than much chalk and petroleum; but the gist of the whole business is, that the men, and their property, must both be produced together—not one to the loss of the other. Property must not be created in lands desolate by exile of their people,—nor multiplied and depraved humanity, in lands barren of bread.

121. Nevertheless, though the men and their possessions are to be increased at the same time, the first object of thought is always to be the multiplication of a worthy people.[1] The strength of the nation is in its multitude, not in its territory; but only in its sound multitude. It is one thing, both in a man and a nation, to gain flesh, and another to be swollen with putrid humours. Not that multitude ever ought to be inconsistent with virtue. Two men should be wiser than one, and two thousand than two; nor do I know another so gross fallacy in the records of human stupidity as that excuse for neglect of crime by greatness of cities. As if the first purpose of congregation were not to devise laws and repress crimes! as if bees and wasps could live honestly in flocks,—men, only in separate dens!—as if it were easy to help one another on the opposite sides of a mountain, and impossible on the opposite sides of a street![2] But when the men are true and good,

[1] [Compare the passages collected in Vol. XVII. p. xc.; also *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 113 (Vol. XVIII. p. 479).]

[2] [That the aggregation in cities causes greater difficulty in this respect is, however, noted elsewhere by Ruskin: see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 5. Hence his conception of Bishops as Overseers: "Down in that back street, Bill and Nancy, knocking each other's teeth out!—Does the bishop know all about it?" (*Sesame and Lilies*, § 22; Vol. XVIII. p. 72).]

and stand shoulder to shoulder, the strength of any nation is in its quantity of life, not in its land nor gold. The more good men a state has, in proportion to its territory, the stronger the state. And as it has been the madness of economists to seek for gold instead of life, so it has been the madness of kings to seek for land instead of life. They want the town on the other side of the river, and seek it at the spear point: it never enters their stupid heads that to double the honest souls in the town on *this* side of the river, would make them stronger kings; and that this doubling might be done by the ploughshare instead of the spear,[1] and through happiness instead of misery.

Therefore, in brief, this is the object of all true policy and true economy: "utmost multitude of good men on every given space of ground"—imperatively always, good, sound, honest men, not a mob of white-faced thieves. So that, on the one hand, all aristocracy is wrong which is inconsistent with numbers; and, on the other, all numbers are wrong which are inconsistent with breeding.

122. Then, touching the accumulation of wealth for the maintenance of such men, observe, that you must never use the terms "money" and "wealth" as synonymous. Wealth consists of the good, and therefore useful, things in the possession of the nation: money is only the written or coined sign of the relative quantities of wealth in each person's possession.[2] All money is a divisible title-deed, of immense importance as an expression of right to property; but absolutely valueless, as property itself. Thus, supposing a nation isolated from all others, the money in its possession is, at its maximum value, worth all the property of the nation, and no more, because no more can be got for it. And the money of all nations is worth, at its maximum, the property of all nations, and no more, for no

[1] [Compare "soldiers of the ploughshare as well as soldiers of the sword," *A Joy for Ever*, § 15 (Vol. XVI. p. 26).]

[2] [Compare *Unto this Last* and *Munera Pulveris*, passim.]

more can be got for it. Thus, every article of property produced increases, by its value, the value of all the money in the world, and every article of property destroyed diminishes the value of all the money in the world. If ten men are cast away on a rock, with a thousand pounds in their pockets, and there is on the rock neither food nor shelter, their money is worth simply nothing; for nothing is to be had for it: if they build ten huts, and recover a cask of biscuit from the wreck, then their thousand pounds, at its maximum value, is worth ten huts and a cask of biscuit. If they make their thousand pounds into two thousand by writing new notes, their two thousand pounds are still only worth ten huts and a cask of biscuit. And the law of relative value is the same for all the world, and all the people in it, and all their property, as for ten men on a rock. Therefore, money is truly and finally lost in the degree in which its value is taken from it, (ceasing in that degree to be money at all); and it is truly gained in the degree in which value is added to it. Thus, suppose the money coined by the nation to be a fixed sum, divided very minutely, (say into francs and cents), and neither to be added to, nor diminished. Then every grain of food and inch of lodging added to its possessions makes every cent in its pockets worth proportionally more, and every grain of food it consumes, and inch of roof it allows to fall to ruin, makes every cent in its pockets worth less; and this with mathematical precision. The immediate value of the money at particular times and places depends, indeed, on the humours of the possessors of property; but the nation is in the one case gradually getting richer; and will feel the pressure of poverty steadily everywhere relaxing, whatever the humours of individuals may be; and, in the other case, is gradually growing poorer, and the pressure of its poverty will every day tell more and more, in ways that it cannot explain, but will most bitterly feel.

123. The actual quantity of money which it coins, in relation to its real property, is therefore only of consequence

for convenience of exchange; but the proportion in which this quantity of money is divided among individuals expresses their various rights to greater or less proportions of the national property, and must not, therefore, be tampered with. The Government may at any time, with perfect justice, double its issue of coinage, if it gives every man who had ten pounds in his pocket, another ten pounds, and every man who had ten pence, another ten pence; for it thus does not make any of them richer; it merely divides their counters for them into twice the number. But if it gives the newly-issued coins to other people, or keeps them itself, it simply robs the former holders to precisely that extent. This most important function of money, as a title-deed, on the non-violation of which all national soundness of commerce and peace of life depend, has been never rightly distinguished by economists from the quite unimportant function of money as a means of exchange. You can exchange goods,—at some inconvenience indeed, but still you can contrive to do it,—without money at all; but you cannot maintain your claim to the savings of your past life without a document declaring the amount of them, which the nation and its Government will respect.

124. And as economists have lost sight of this great function of money in relation to individual rights, so they have equally lost sight of its function as a representative of good things. That, for every good thing produced, so much money is put into everybody's pocket—is the one simple and primal truth for the public to know, and for economists to teach. How many of them have taught it? Some have; but only incidentally; and others will say it is a truism. If it be, do the public know it? Does your ordinary English householder know that every costly dinner he gives has destroyed as much money as it is worth? Does every well-educated girl—do even the women in high political position—know that every fine dress they wear themselves, or cause to be worn, destroys precisely so much of the national money as the labour and material of it are

worth? If this be a truism, it is one that needs proclaiming somewhat louder.

125. That, then, is the relation of money and goods. So much goods, so much money; so little goods, so little money. But, as there is this true relation between money and "goods," or good things, so there is a false relation between money and "bads," or bad things. Many bad things will fetch a price in exchange; but they do not increase the wealth of the country. Good wine is wealth—drugged wine is not; good meat is wealth—putrid meat is not; good pictures are wealth—bad pictures are not. A thing is worth precisely what it can do for you; not what you choose to pay for it. You may pay a thousand pounds for a cracked pipkin, if you please; but you do not by that transaction make the cracked pipkin worth one that will hold water, nor that, nor any pipkin whatsoever, worth more than it was before you paid such sum for it. You may, perhaps, induce many potters to manufacture fissured pots, and many amateurs of clay to buy them; but the nation is, through the whole business so encouraged, rich by the addition to its wealth of so many potsherds—and there an end. The thing is worth what it CAN do for you, not what you think it can; and most national luxuries, now-a-days, are a form of potsherd provided for the solace of a self-complacent Job, voluntarily sedent on his ash-heap.[1]

126. And, also, so far as good things already exist, and have become media of exchange, the variations in their prices are absolutely indifferent to the nation. Whether Mr. A. buys a Titian from Mr. B. for twenty, or for two thousand, pounds, matters not sixpence to the national revenue: that is to say, it matters in nowise to the revenue whether Mr. A. has the picture, and Mr. B. the money, or Mr. B. the picture, and Mr. A. the money. Which of them will spend the money most wisely, and which of them will keep the picture most carefully, is, indeed, a matter of

[1] [See Job ii. 8.]

some importance; but this cannot be known by the mere fact of exchange.

127. The wealth of a nation then, first, and its peace and well-being besides, depend on the number of persons it can employ in making good and useful things. I say its well-being also, for the character of men depends more on their occupations than on any teaching we can give them, or principles with which we can imbue them. The employment forms the habits.

. . . . . .[1]

132. . . . I find by me a violent little fragment of undelivered lecture, which puts this, perhaps, still more clearly. Your idle people, (it says,) as they are now, are not merely waste coal-beds. They are explosive coal-beds, which you pay a high annual rent for. You are keeping all these idle persons, remember, at far greater cost than if they were busy. Do you think a vicious person eats less than an honest one? or that it is cheaper to keep a bad man drunk, than a good man sober? There is, I suppose, a dim idea in the mind of the public, that they don't pay for the maintenance of people they don't employ. Those staggering rascals at the street corner, grouped around its splendid angle of public-house, we fancy they are no servants of ours! that we pay them no wages! that no cash out of our pocket is spent over that beer-stained counter!

Whose cash is it then they are spending? It is not got honestly by work. You know that much. Where do they get it from? Who has paid for their dinner and their pot? Those fellows can live only in one of two ways—by pillage or beggary. Their annual income by thieving comes out of the public pocket, you will admit. They are not cheaply

[1] [The rest of § 127 and §§ 128–132 were reprinted from the *Notes on the General Principles of Employment for the Destitute and Criminal Classes:* see Vol. XVII. pp. 541–545. The passage ends with the question "Shall we do so [*i.e.*, "feed the drunkard, vagabond, and thief"] by letting them rob us of their food and do no work for it; or shall we give them their food in appointed quantity, and enforce their doing work which shall be worth it, and which, in process of time, will redeem their own characters, and make them happy and serviceable members of society?"]

fed, so far as they are fed by theft. But the rest of their living—all that they don't steal—they must beg. Not with success from you, you think. Wise as benevolent, you never gave a penny in "indiscriminate charity." Well, I congratulate you on the freedom of your conscience from that sin, mine being bitterly burdened with the memory of many a sixpence given to beggars of whom I knew nothing, but that they had pale faces and thin waists. But it is not that kind of street beggary that the vagabonds of our people chiefly practise. It is home beggary that is the worst beggars' trade. Home alms which it is their worst degradation to receive. Those scamps know well enough that you and your wisdom are worth nothing to them. They won't beg of you. They will beg of their sisters, and mothers, and wives, and children, and of any one else who is enough ashamed of being of the same blood with them to pay to keep them out of sight. Every one of those blackguards is the bane of a family. *That* is the deadly "indiscriminate charity"[1]—the charity which each household pays to maintain its own private curse.

188. And you think that is no affair of yours? and that every family ought to watch over and subdue its own living plague? Put it to yourselves this way, then: suppose you knew every one of those families kept an idol in an inner room—a big-bellied bronze figure, to which daily sacrifice and oblation was made; at whose feet so much beer and brandy were poured out every morning on the ground; and before which, every night, good meat, enough for two men's keep, was set, and left, till it was putrid, and then carried out and thrown on the dunghill;—you would put an end to that form of idolatry with your best diligence, I suppose. You would understand then that the beer, and brandy, and meat, were wasted; and that the burden imposed by each household on itself lay heavily through them on the whole community? But, suppose

[1] [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, Appendix vi. (Vol. XVII. p. 293); *Sesame and Lilies*, § 136 (Vol. XVIII. p. 182); and *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 41.]

farther, that this idol were not of silent and quiet bronze only;—but an ingenious mechanism, wound up every morning, to run itself down in automatic blasphemies; that it struck and tore with its hands the people who set food before it; that it was anointed with poisonous unguents, and infected the air for miles round. You would interfere with the idolatry then, straightway? Will you not interfere with it now, when the infection that the venomous idol spreads is not merely death—but sin?

184. So far the old lecture. Returning to cool English, the end of the matter is, that sooner or later, we shall have to register our people; and to know how they live; and to make sure, if they are capable of work, that right work is given them to do.

. . . . . .[1]

I give now, for such farther illustration as they contain of the points I desire most to insist upon with respect both to education and employment, a portion of the series of notes published some time ago in the *Art Journal*, on the opposition of Modesty and Liberty, and the unescapable law of wise restraint. I am sorry that they are written obscurely;—and it may be thought affectedly:—but the fact is, I have always had three different ways of writing: one, with the single view of making myself understood, in which I necessarily omit a great deal of what comes into my head; another, in which I say what I think ought to be said, in what I suppose to be the best words I can find for it; (which is in reality an affected style—be it good or bad;) and my third way of writing is to say all that comes into my head for my own pleasure, in the first words that come, retouching them afterwards into (approximate) grammar. These notes for the *Art Journal* were so written; and I like them myself, of course; but ask the reader's pardon for their confusedness.

[1] [Here the reprint from the pamphlet—*Notes on the General Principles of Employment for the Destitute and Criminal Classes*—was resumed: see Vol. XVII. pp. 545–546: "The different classes of work for which bodies of men could be consistently organized . . . the service of women and children."]

135[1]–142. . . . . .

148. Next to Modesty, and her delight in measures, let us reflect a little on the character of her adversary, the Goddess of Liberty, and her delight in the absence of measures, or in false ones. It is true that there are liberties and liberties. Yonder torrent, crystal-clear, and arrow-swift, with its spray leaping into the air like white troops of fawns, is free enough. Lost, presently, amidst bankless, boundless marsh—soaking in slow shallowness, as it will, hither and thither, listless, among the poisonous reeds and unresisting slime—it is free also. We may choose which liberty we like,—the restraint of voiceful rock, or the dumb and edgeless shore of darkened sand. Of that evil liberty, which men are now glorifying, and proclaiming as essence of gospel to all the earth, and will presently, I suppose, proclaim also to the stars, with invitation to them *out* of their courses,—and of its opposite continence, which is the clasp and χρυσέη περόνη of Aglaia's cestus, we must try to find out something true. For no quality of art has been more powerful in its influence on public mind. . . .[2]

160. Thus far the notes on Freedom. Now, lastly, here is some talk which I tried at the time to make intelligible; and with which I close this volume, because it will serve sufficiently to express the practical relation in which I think the art and imagination of the Greeks stand to our own; and will show the reader that my view of that relation is unchanged, from the first day on which I began to write, until now.

[1] [Here followed in *The Queen of the Air*, reprinted with slight verbal corrections (see "Variæ Lectiones," above, p. 46), §§ 22–29 of *The Cestus of Aglaia*: see above, pp. 72–81 (the reprint in *The Queen of the Air* ending with the words "endlessly manifold victory"). In § 143 the passage from "there are liberties and liberties" is also taken, with alterations, from *The Cestus of Aglaia*, § 68 (see above, pp. 118–119).]

[2] [Here in *The Queen of the Air* (§§ 143–159) are reprinted §§ 69–85 of *The Cestus of Aglaia*: see above, pp. 120–133.]

The Hercules of Camarina

Address to the Students of the Art School of South Lambeth, March 15th, 1869

161. Among the photographs of Greek coins which present so many admirable subjects for your study, I must speak for the present of one only: the Hercules of Camarina.[1] You have, represented by a Greek workman, in that coin, the face of a man, and the skin of a lion's head. And the man's face is like a man's face, but the lion's skin is not like a lion's skin.

162. Now there are some people who will tell you that Greek art is fine, because it is true; and because it carves men's faces as like men's faces as it can.

And there are other people who will tell you that Greek art is fine because it is not true; and carves a lion's skin so as to look not at all like a lion's skin.

And you fancy that one or other of these sets of people must be wrong, and are perhaps much puzzled to find out which you should believe.

But neither of them are wrong, and you will have eventually to believe, or rather to understand and know, in reconciliation, the truths taught by each;—but for the present, the teachers of the first group are those you must follow.

It is they who tell you the deepest and usefullest truth, which involves all others in time. *Greek art, and all other art, is fine when it makes a man's face as like a man's face*

[1] [The front of the coin, which formed the subject of this lecture, is engraved in the centre of Plate XVIII. The coin may be seen in the British Museum (II. C. 17 in the collection of electrotypes of Select Greek and Roman Coins). On the reverse is a representation of Pallas Athena as a victor at the Olympic games, with a flying "Victory" crowning her (see above, § 72, p. 367): to the goddess is the glory given. The coin thus illustrates the fifth Olympian ode of Pindar, written to celebrate the victory of Psaumis of Camarina: "Thy sacred grove, O city-guarding Pallas, doth the victor sing." For another reference to the coin, see below, Appendix ii., § 6 (p. 467). For particulars of the other coins engraved on Plate XVIII., see the Introduction, above, pp. lxxvii.-lxxviii.]

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The Riders of Tarentum
Hercules of Camarina
Nike of Heraclea Juno of Argos

as it can.[1] Hold to that. All kinds of nonsense are talked to you, now-a-days, ingeniously and irrelevantly about art. Therefore, for the most part of the day, shut your ears, and keep your eyes open: and understand primarily, what you may, I fancy, understand easily, that the greatest masters of all greatest schools—Phidias, Donatello, Titian, Velasquez, or Sir Joshua Reynolds—all tried to make human creatures as like human creatures as they could; and that anything less like humanity than their work, is not so good as theirs.

Get that well driven into your heads; and don't let it out again, at your peril.

168. Having got it well in, you may then farther understand, safely, that there is a great deal of secondary work in pots, and pans, and floors, and carpets, and shawls, and architectural ornament, which ought, essentially, to be *unlike* reality, and to depend for its charm on quite other qualities than imitative ones. But all such art is inferior and secondary—much of it more or less instinctive and animal; and a civilized human creature can only learn its principles rightly, by knowing those of great civilized art first—which is always the representation, to the utmost of its power, of whatever it has got to show—made to look as like the thing as possible. Go into the National Gallery, and look at the foot of Correggio's Venus there.[2] Correggio made it as like a foot as he could, and you won't easily find anything liker. Now, you will find on any Greek vase something meant for a foot, or a hand, which is not at all like one. The Greek vase is a good thing in its way, but Correggio's picture is the best work.

164. So, again, go into the Turner room of the National Gallery, and look at Turner's drawing of "Ivy Bridge."[3] You will find the water in it is like real water, and the

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 122.]

[2] ["The Education of Cupid," No. 10. For other references to the picture, see *The Study of Architecture*, § 10 (above, p. 29 *n.*).]

[3] [No. 556: see Vol. XIII. p. 269.]

ducks in it are like real ducks. Then go into the British Museum, and look for an Egyptian landscape, and you will find the water in that constituted of blue zigzags, not at all like water;[1] and ducks in the middle of it made of red lines, looking not in the least as if they could stand stuffing with sage and onions. They are very good in their way, but Turner's are better.

165. I will not pause to fence my general principle against what you perfectly well know of the due contradiction,—that a thing may be painted very like, yet painted ill. Rest content with knowing that it *must* be like, if it is painted well; and take this further general law:—Imitation is like charity. When it is done for love, it is lovely; when it is done for show, hateful.

166. Well, then, this Greek coin is fine, first because the face is like a face. Perhaps you think there is something particularly handsome in the face, which you can't see in the photograph, or can't at present appreciate. But there is nothing of the kind. It is a very regular, quiet, commonplace sort of face; and any average English gentleman's, of good descent, would be far handsomer.

167. Fix that in your heads also, therefore, that Greek faces are not particularly beautiful.[2] Of the much nonsense against which you are to keep your ears shut, that which is talked to you of the Greek ideal of beauty, is among the absolutest. There is not a single instance of a very beautiful head left by the highest school of Greek art. On coins, there is even no approximately beautiful one.[3] The

[1] [See the wall-paintings from Thebes affixed to recesses on the east wall of the North Egyptian Gallery.]

[2] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 194.]

[3] [For the Juno of Argos, see III. B. 36 in the British Museum (Plate 23 in the *Guide to the Principal Coins of the Ancients*): the head is engraved on Plate XVIII. here. For the Athena of Athens, II. B. 20 (Plate 13)—a coin which is reproduced in Fig. 4 of *Aratra Pentelici* (Vol. XX.). An archaic Athena of Corinth is given in Fig. 5 in *Aratra:* a more pleasing head is III. B. 31 (Plate 23) in the British Museum. For the "sensual" Athena of Thurium, see III. C. 17 (Plate 25)—the obverse of a coin already referred to (above, p. 22): another "Athena of Thurium" and the "Siren Ligeia" are given in Plates XX. and XIX. of *Aratra*. For a specimen of the celebrated heads of Arethusa on Syracusan coins, see III. C. 29 (Plate 25) in the British Museum, and Plate II. in *Aratra Pentelici*. The Mercury

Juno of Argos is a virago; the Athena of Athens grotesque; the Athena of Corinth is insipid; and of Thurium, sensual. The Siren Ligeia, and fountain of Arethusa, on the coins of Terina and Syracuse, are prettier, but totally without expression, and chiefly set off by their well-curled hair. You might have expected something subtle in Mercuries; but the Mercury of Ænus is a very stupid-looking fellow, in a cap like a bowl, with a knob on the top of it. The Bacchus of Thasos is a drayman with his hair pomatum'd. The Jupiter of Syracuse is, however, calm and refined; and the Apollo of Clazomenæ would have been impressive, if he had not come down to us much flattened by friction. But on the whole, the merit of Greek coins does not primarily depend on beauty of features, nor even, in the period of highest art, that of the statues. You may take the Venus of Melos[1] as a standard of beauty of the central Greek type. She has tranquil, regular, and lofty features; but could not hold her own for a moment against the beauty of a simple English girl, of pure race and kind heart.

168. And the reason that Greek art, on the whole, bores you, (and you know it does,) is that you are always forced to look in it for something that is not there; but which may be seen every day, in real life, all round you; and which you are naturally disposed to delight in, and ought to delight in. For the Greek race was not at all one of exalted beauty, but only of general and healthy completeness of form. They were only, and could be only, beautiful in body to the degree that they were beautiful in soul; (for you will find, when you read deeply into

of Ænus is the central figure on Plate VIII. of *Aratra*. For a Bacchus of Thasos (which, however, hardly bears out Ruskin's description), see II. B. 7 (Plate 12) in the British Museum. The Zeus of Syracuse is given in Plate XVIII. of *Aratra*, and the Apollo of Clazomenæ is on Plate X. in the same; for another reference to the Apollo of Clazomenæ, see *Ethics of the Dust*, § 107 (Vol. XVIII. p. 343).]

[1] [Elsewhere referred to by Ruskin as "the Venus Victrix" of the Louvre: see *Time and Tide*, § 160 (Vol. XVII. p. 448). Compare in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 166), a note of 1883, where Ruskin says that "living girls may be very pretty without being like the Venus de' Medici."]

the matter, that the body is only the soul made visible[1]). And the Greeks were indeed very good people, much better people than most of us think, or than many of us are; but there are better people alive now than the best of them, and lovelier people to be seen now, than the loveliest of them.

169. Then, what *are* the merits of this Greek art, which make it so exemplary for you? Well, not that it is beautiful, but that it is Right.* All that it desires to do, it does, and all that it does, does well. You will find, as you advance in the knowledge of art, that its laws of self-restraint are very marvellous; that its peace of heart, and contentment in doing a simple thing, with only one or two qualities, restrictedly desired, and sufficiently attained, are a most wholesome element of education for you, as opposed to the wild writhing, and wrestling, and longing for the moon, and tilting at windmills, and agony of eyes, and torturing of fingers, and general spinning out of one's soul into fiddlestrings, which constitute the ideal life of a modern artist.

Also observe, there is entire masterhood of its business up to the required point. A Greek does not reach after other people's strength, nor out-reach his own. He never tries to paint before he can draw; he never tries to lay on flesh where there are no bones; and he never expects to find the bones of anything in his inner consciousness. Those are his first merits—sincere and innocent purpose, strong common sense and principle, and all the strength that comes of these, and all the grace that follows on that strength.

170. But, secondly, Greek art is always exemplary in disposition of masses, which is a thing that in modern days students rarely look for, artists not enough, and the public never. But, whatever else Greek work may fail of, you may be always sure its masses are well placed, and their

* Compare above, § 101 [p. 388].

[1] [On this subject, compare Vol. IV. p. 182; and Vol. XVII. p. 149.]

placing has been the object of the most subtle care. Look, for instance, at the inscription in front of this Hercules of the name of the town—Camarina. You can't read it, even though you may know Greek, without some pains; for the sculptor knew well enough that it mattered very little whether you read it or not, for the Camarina Hercules could tell his own story;[1] but what did above all things matter was, that no K or A or M should come in a wrong place with respect to the outline of the head, and divert the eye from it, or spoil any of its lines. So the whole inscription is thrown into a sweeping curve of gradually diminishing size, continuing from the lion's paws, round the neck, up to the forehead, and answering a decorative purpose as completely as the curls of the mane opposite. Of these, again, you cannot change or displace one without mischief: they are almost as even in reticulation as a piece of basket-work; but each has a different form and a due relation to the rest, and if you set to work to draw that mane rightly, you will find that, whatever time you give to it, you can't get the tresses quite into their places, and that every tress out of its place does an injury. If you want to test your powers of accurate drawing you may make that lion's mane your *pons asinorum*. I have never yet met with a student who didn't make an ass in a lion's skin of himself, when he tried it.

171. Granted, however, that these tresses may be finely placed, still they are not like a lion's mane. So we come back to the question,—if the face is to be like a man's face, why is not the lion's mane to be like a lion's mane? Well, because it can't be like a lion's mane without too much trouble;—and inconvenience after that, and poor success, after all. Too much trouble, in cutting the die into fine fringes and jags; inconvenience after that,—because fringes and jags would spoil the surface of a coin; poor success after all,—because, though you can easily stamp cheeks

[1] [On the comparative rudeness of inscriptions on Greek coins, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 356 and n.).]

and foreheads smooth at a blow, you can't stamp projecting tresses fine at a blow, whatever pains you take with your die.

So your Greek uses his common sense, wastes no time, loses no skill, and says to you, "Here are beautifully set tresses, which I have carefully designed and easily stamped. Enjoy them; and if you cannot understand that they mean lion's mane, heaven mend your wits."

172. See then, you have in this work, well-founded knowledge, simple and right aims, thorough mastery of handicraft, splendid invention in arrangement, unerring common sense in treatment,—merits, these, I think, exemplary enough to justify our tormenting you a little with Greek Art. But it has one merit more than these, the greatest of all. *It always means something worth saying. Not merely worth saying for that time only, but for all time.*[1] What do you think this helmet of lion's hide is always given to Hercules for? You can't suppose it means only that he once killed a lion, and always carried its skin afterwards to show that he had, as Indian sportsmen send home stuffed rugs, with claws at the corners, and a lump in the middle, which one tumbles over every time one stirs the fire. What *was* this Nemean Lion, whose spoils were evermore to cover Hercules from the cold? Not merely a large specimen of Felis Leo, ranging the fields of Nemea, be sure of that. This Nemean cub was one of a bad litter. Born of Typhon and Echidna,[2]—of the whirlwind and the snake,—Cerberus his brother, the Hydra of Lerna his sister,[3]—it must have been difficult to get his hide off him. He had to be found in darkness too, and dealt upon without weapons, by grip at the throat—arrows and club of no avail against him. What does all that mean?

173. It means that the Nemean Lion is the first great adversary of life, whatever that may be—to Hercules, or

[1] [The italics here and on the next page are introduced in accordance with Ruskin's note in his copy.]

[2] [For Typhon and Echidna, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 398–399).]

[3] [Compare § 4; above, p. 299.]

to any of us, then or now. The first monster we have to strangle, or to be destroyed by, fighting in the dark, and with none to help us, only Athena standing by, to encourage with her smile. Every man's Nemean Lion lies in wait for him somewhere. The slothful man says, there is a lion in the path. He says well. The quite *un*slothful man says the same, and knows it too. But they differ in their further reading of the text. The slothful man says, *I* shall be slain, and the unslothful, IT shall be. It is the first ugly and strong enemy that rises against us, all future victory depending on victory over that. Kill it; and through all the rest of life, what was once dreadful is your armour, and you are clothed with that conquest for every other, and helmed with its crest of fortitude for evermore.[1]

Alas, we have most of us to walk bareheaded; but that is the meaning of the story of Nemea,—worth laying to heart and thinking of, sometimes, when you see a dish garnished with parsley, which was the crown at the Nemean games.

174. How far, then, have we got, in our list of the merits of Greek art now?

Sound knowledge.
Simple aims.
Mastered craft.
Vivid invention.
Strong common sense.
And eternally true and wise meaning.

Are these not enough? Here is one more then, which will find favour, I should think, with the British Lion. *Greek art is never frightened at anything, it is always cool.*

175. It differs essentially from all other art, past or present, in this *incapability of being frightened.* Half the power and imagination of every other school depend on a certain feverish terror mingling with their sense of beauty;

[1] [On this point compare ch. x., "The Heraldic Ordinaries," in *The Eagle's Nest*, § 229.]

—the feeling that a child has in a dark room, or a sick person in seeing ugly dreams. But the Greeks never have ugly dreams. They cannot draw anything ugly when they try. Sometimes they put themselves to their wits'-end to draw an ugly thing,—the Medusa's head, for instance,—but they can't do it,—not they,—because nothing frightens them. They widen the mouth, and grind the teeth, and puff the cheeks, and set the eyes a-goggling; and the thing is only ridiculous after all, not the least dreadful, for there is no dread in their hearts.[1] Pensiveness; amazement; often deepest grief and desolateness. All these; but terror never. Everlasting calm in the presence of all fate; and joy such as they could win, not indeed in a perfect beauty, but in beauty at perfect rest! A kind of art this, surely, to be looked at, and thought upon sometimes with profit, even in these latter days.

176. To be looked at sometimes. Not continually, and never as a model for imitation. For you are not Greeks; but, for better or worse, English creatures; and cannot do, even if it were a thousand times better worth doing, anything well, except what your English hearts shall prompt, and your English skies teach you. For all good art is the natural utterance of its own people in its own day.[2]

But also, your own art is a better and brighter one than ever this Greek art was. Many motives, powers, and insights have been added to those elder ones. The very corruptions into which we have fallen are signs of a subtle life, higher than theirs was, and therefore more fearful in its faults and death. Christianity has neither superseded, nor, by itself, excelled heathenism; but it has added its own good, won also by many a Nemean contest in dark valleys, to all that was good and noble in heathenism: and our present thoughts and work, when they are right, are nobler than the heathen's. And we are not reverent

[1] [For references to examples in the British Museum, see E. T. Cook's *Handbook to the Greek and Roman Antiquities*, pp. 91, 323.]

[2] [Compare Vol. V. p. 127, and Vol. XII. p. 151.]

enough to them, because we possess too much of them. That sketch of four cherub heads from an English girl, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, at Kensington,[1] is an incomparably finer thing than ever the Greeks did. Ineffably tender in the touch, yet Herculean in power; innocent, yet exalted in feeling; pure in colour as a pearl: reserved and decisive in design, as this Lion crest;—if *it* alone existed of such, if it were a picture by Zeuxis, the only one left in the world, and you built a shrine for it, and were allowed to see it only seven days in a year, it alone would teach you all of art that you ever needed to know. But you do not learn from this or any other such work, because you have not reverence enough for them, and are trying to learn from all at once, and from a hundred other masters besides.

177. Here, then, is the practical advice which I would venture to deduce from what I have tried to show you. Use Greek art as a first, not a final, teacher. Learn to draw carefully from Greek work; above all, to place forms correctly, and to use light and shade tenderly. Never allow yourselves black shadows. It is easy to make things look round and projecting; but the things to exercise yourselves in are the placing of the masses, and the modelling of the lights. It is an admirable exercise to take a pale wash of colour for all the shadows, never reinforcing it everywhere, but drawing the statue as if it were in far distance, making all the darks one flat pale tint. Then model from those into the lights, rounding as well as you can, on those subtle conditions. In your chalk drawings, separate the lights from the darks at once all over; then reinforce the darks slightly where absolutely necessary, and put your whole strength on the lights and their limits. Then, when you have learned to draw thoroughly, take one master for your painting, as you would have done necessarily in old

[1] [Now at the National Gallery, No. 182: "Heads of Angels" (portraits in different views of the daughter of Lord William Gordon); there are *five* heads. Compare *Art of England*, § 67.]

times by being put into his school (were I to choose for you, it should be among six men only,—Titian, Correggio, Paul Veronese, Velasquez, Reynolds, or Holbein.[1] If you are a landscapist, Turner must be your only guide, for no other great landscape painter has yet lived[2]); and having chosen, do your best to understand your own chosen master, and obey *him*, and no one else, till you have strength to deal with the nature itself round you, and then, be your own master and see with your own eyes. If you have got masterhood or sight in you, that is the way to make the most of them; and if you have neither, you will at least be sound in your work, prevented from immodest and useless effort, and protected from vulgar and fantastic error.

And so I wish you all, good speed, and the favour of Hercules and the Muses; and to those who shall best deserve them, the crown of Parsley[3] first, and then of the Laurel.

[1] [Compare Ruskin's list in *Elements of Drawing*, § 256 (Vol. XV. p. 220).]
[2] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 453).]
[3] [For another reference to the Parsley crown—the reward of Victor in the Nemean games—see above, § 77, p. 369.]

[SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS[1]

Lecture i.—"Athena in the Heavens": a lecture on Greek Myths of Storm.

§ 1. Sincerity of the old mythology.

§ 2. The veiled meaning in myths.

§§ 3, 4. The simple belief in miraculous events gradually invested with moral meanings.

§§ 5, 6. The origin of myths (1) in historical events, represented by the fancy under figures personifying them (this branch of the subject is not here to be touched upon); (2) in natural phenomena, similarly personified. The root of the myth is in these phenomena; then, secondly, the personification becomes "a companionable deity"; and, thirdly, the image is invested with moral significance.

§ 7. The real meaning of any myth (that is, the meaning which is eternally and beneficently true) is that which it has at the noblest age of the nation among whom it is current.

§ 8. Such meanings can only be read by an intelligent answering sympathy.

§ 9. The age in Greek mythology selected for examination in this book is that of Pindar and Æschylus—"near the beginning of the central faith" of Greece.

§ 10. The four elemental forces.

§ 11. First, Demeter, the Spirit of Earth.

§ 12. Second, Poseidon, the Spirit of Water.

§ 13. Third, Fire—Hephæstus, the Spirit of Earthly Fire; Apollo, of Heavenly Fire.

§ 14. Fourth, Air—Athena: physically, the queen of the air; spiritually, the queen of the breath of man, both bodily and spiritually.

§ 15. Athena as the queen of the four cardinal virtues, and her corresponding attributes.

§ 16. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as songs of noble passion and noble patience.

§§ 17, 18. The importance of the ethical element in the Homeric poems.

§ 19 (Ruskin now passes to the inferior deities of storm). The myth of Æolus illustrated from Homer.

[1] [This is not by Ruskin, but is added by the editors of this edition, as explained above; Introduction, p. lxvi.]

§§ 20–22. The myths of Boreas and the Harpies, in their physical and moral meanings.

§§ 23, 24. The myth of Tantalus, and allied myths; with notes on the dog in mythology.

§§ 25–28. Hermes as the Lord of Cloud.

§§ 29, 30. Other cloud myths.

§ 31. Summary of the functions of Athena as Queen of the Air, physically.

§§ 32–37. (I.) The Spirit of Life giving vitality to the blood.

§ 38. (II.) The Air giving vegetative impulse to the earth.

§ 39. (III.) The Air giving motion to the sea.

§ 40. (IV.) The Air nourishing artificial light.

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§ 44. Summary of the functions of Athena as Queen of the Air, spiritually—(1) the Spirit of Life in material organism (Lecture ii.); and (2) inspired and impulsive wisdom in human conduct and human art (Lecture iii.).

§ 45. Sincerity of the common people's belief in a real Athena.

§ 46. The more refined belief of the upper classes.

§§ 47–49. Sincerity of the poets and philosophers.

§ 50. Greek religion and a future life.

Lecture ii.—"Athena in the Earth": a study of the relations of Athena to the vital force in material organism.

§§ 51–59. Reality of such a spiritual force; giving their several shapes to things, and their several feelings.

§§ 60, 61. Illustrated from the case of the spirit in the plant.

§§ 62, 63. Distinctions of species in relation to man. (In this part of the book, Ruskin's argument, it will be noticed by the reader, rests on the assumption of design, as in Butler's *Analogy*.)

§ 64. The argument to be illustrated from two orders—birds and reptiles—as characteristic of the moral aspect of the animal world.

§§ 65, 66. The Bird as the very spirit of the air.

§ 67 (parenthetical). The importance of natural myths.

§ 68. The Serpent as the spirit of the dust; a divine hieroglyph of the demoniac power of the earth.

§§ 69, 70. But the earth has a purifying, as well as a corrupting, function; hence the serpent in connexion with Athena.

§§ 71, 72. Serpent and bird myths as tests of the moral state and fineness of intelligence of different races.

§§ 73–89 (resumption of the argument from § 64). The distinctions of species in the plant world in their moral aspect.

§ 91. Athena as the formative spirit in such material organisms.

§ 92. Significance of her epithet "Glaukopis," in connexion with the light of heaven.

§§ 93, 94. Significance of Athena's owl and of the blue of her ægis.

§ 95. Athena's "sacred chord of colours," in connexion with the creative spirit of the earth.

§§ 96, 97. Early types in art give little clue to the imaginative conception of mythology.

§§ 98–100. Summary of the creative forces symbolised by Athena.

Lecture iii.—"Athena in the Heart": notes relating to the conception of Athena as directress of the imagination and will.

§ 101. She teaches men to make their work, not so much beautiful, as right. Rightness of work in art is connected with virtue of character.

§§ 102–105. General assertion of this principle.

§ 106. The Foundation of art in moral character.

§§ 107, 112. Art-gift as the result of inherited character.

§§ 108–111, 113. Great art, being rooted in such virtue, is in its essence didactic.

§§ 114–116. Foundation of the arts in war.

§§ 117, 118. Athena as presiding over righteous war.

§ 119. Athena as presiding over well-ordered industry.

§§ 120–126. The aim of a sound system of Political Economy.

§§ 127–134. Principles of Employment.

§§ 135–160. A discourse on Liberty and Restraint.

§§ 161–177. "The Hercules of Camarina": a lecture on the characteristics of Greek Art. (This portion of the book connects with § 101, the main virtue of Greek art being said to be "not that it is beautiful, but that it is Right").]

IX

VERONA, AND ITS RIVERS

(1870)

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This lecture was delivered at the Royal Institution on Friday, February 4, 1870 (the title being, "A Talk respecting Verona and its Rivers"), and was first reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of February 5, 1870. The report, though it omits some passages and summarises others, is for the rest almost *verbatim*, the author's MS. having presumably been lent to the reporter for the purpose. This report in the *Pall Mall Gazette* was reprinted in *Igdrasil*, March 1892, vol. iii. pp. 241–247, and thence in the privately-issued *Ruskiniana*, part ii. 1892, pp. 211–217.

An account of the lecture was published, secondly, in the *Proceedings of the Royal Institution*, vol. vi. pp. 55–61. This is a synopsis of the lecture, with several textual quotations, supplied by Ruskin. It is, however, not so full as the report in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. The synopsis was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 654–664 (§§ 522–532); and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. ii. pp. 279–291 (§§ 231–241).

The complete lecture, printed from the author's MS., was published in 1895 in a volume (arranged by W. G. Collingwood) with the following title-page:—

> Verona | and Other Lectures | By | John Ruskin, | D.C.L., LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, Honorary Fellow of Corpus | Christi College, and sometime Slade Professor of | Fine Art in the University of Oxford. | With Illustrations | From Drawings by the Author. | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington | and | 156 Charing Cross Road, London. | 1894.

Octavo, pp. xx. + 168. On the reverse of the title-page at the foot "[*All rights reserved*]." Editor's Introduction, signed "W. G. C. Coniston, *Nov.* 1893," pp. v.–xvi. Contents, p. xvii.; List of Illustrations, p. xix. "Verona, and its Rivers" (with fly-title), pp. 1–30; "The Story of Arachne" (again with fly-title, as in the case of the other contents), pp. 31–54 (see in this edition, Vol. XX.); "The Tortoise of Ægina," pp. 55–75 (in this edition, Vol. XX.); "Candida Casa," pp. 77–108; "Appendix to 'Candida Casa,' On Saxon Money," pp. 109–111; "Mending the Sieve," pp. 113–143; "Appendix to 'Mending the Sieve,' On the Foundation of Cluny," pp. 144–152 (for these latter contents, see in this edition the volume containing *Our Fathers have Told Us*). Index, pp. 153–168. Imprint (at the foot of p. 168): "Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson and Co. | Edinburgh and London."

Issued on June 15, 1894. 250 copies on hand-made paper, large post quarto, bound in half parchment (30s.); and 800 copies, bound in green cloth (15s., reduced in July 1900 to 12s. 6d.). The ordinary issue is still current.

The following is the "List of Illustrations," with references added to the places where they will severally be found in this edition:—

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(All these plates, except the last two, are photographic reproductions of drawings by the Author.)

The Catalogue (here appended, pp. 449–458) of Drawings shown at the Lecture on Verona was published in 1870 as a pamphlet, with the following title on the front wrapper:—

> Drawings and Photographs, Illustrative of | the Architecture of Verona, shown at | the Royal Institution, Feb. 4th, 1870. | London: Queen Street Printing Office. | 1870.

Octavo, pp. 15. No headlines, the pages being numbered centrally. Issued stitched, without wrappers.

The catalogue was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 665–673 (§§ 533–544); and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. ii. pp. 292–302 (§§ 242–252).

A review of the Catalogue appeared in the *Art Journal*, March 1870, N.S., vol. 9, p. 94.

Variæ Lectiones.—In this edition the text of 1894 has been followed, except where now and again it inadvertently differs from the MS. Thus in § 1, line 11, "cool" is substituted for "the cool"; § 3, line 4, "rises" for "rise"; § 12, line 6, "all" is omitted before "art"; and § 23, line 21, "artists'" is substituted for "artist's" (in accordance with the synopsis in the *Proceedings*).

The synopsis in the *Proceedings* gives parts of §§ 2, 3, 6, 9, 12–17, 23, 24, 26, 29 to end; and summarises §§ 11 and 25. This synopsis was no doubt revised by Ruskin, and shows some differences of text (which were not adopted in 1894), as follows:—

§ 2, lines 12, 13, "lived; and, under" for "lived and died. Under . . ."

§ 3, line 6, "and it represents" for "and they represent"; line 10, "it is" for "this is."

§ 9, line 13, "centre" for "central light"; line 16, "those" for "these."

§ 12, lines 4–6, "but wild beasts" for "but out of . . . nature," and "this period" for "that date."

§ 13, line 6, "now" omitted in the synopsis, which reads "do not expect any more to find wild beasts to hunt" for "must . . . beasts"; line 13, "of" before "pleasure" omitted.

§ 30, lines 12–13, "that" for "the mischief."

§ 31, lines 12–13 read "falls, is literally rain of gold. We seek . . ."; line 16, "wild" for "frantic" (and so the MS.).

§ 32, line 12, "plan" for "plans" (and so the MS.).

In the Catalogue, No. 43 (p. 457), "(R.)" has here been added.]

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Niche on the Tomb of Can Signorio, Verona

VERONA, AND ITS RIVERS

(A Lecture given at the Royal Institution, Friday, February 4, 1870)

1. If you chance to be at Verona[1] on a clear, warm summer's day, and to be weary—as may well happen—at the end of it, take a light carriage, and drive out at the eastern gate (on the way to the station for Venice). You will see, fifty yards beyond the gate, a good road turning to the left—and from that, as immediately, another turning to the left again, which, by a gradual slope, begins to ascend the hill on which the eastern walls of Verona are built.

You will then presently find yourself, if it is towards evening, in the shade of those walls, and in cool and pure air, ascending, by a winding road, a hill covered with maize and vines; into the rocks of which, between you and the city walls, a steep ditch has been cut,—some thirty feet deep by sixty or eighty wide,—the defence of the city on that side being trusted to this one magnificent trench cut out of the solid rock, and to the precipice-like wall, above, with towers, crested with forked battlements, set along it at due intervals.

2. It was possible to cut that rock-trench—which, as you will find presently—is carried up the hill beside you for about an English mile—without gunpowder, because the rock is a soft and crumbling limestone, on which, when you see the dusty banks of it emerge under the hedges by the roadside, you, if a member of the Royal Institution, must look with great reverence. For in that white rock there

[1] [Compare the descriptions of Verona in *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 1 (Vol. XII. p. 15 and *n.*); and *A Joy for Ever*, § 76 (Vol. XVI. p. 66): see, too, Ruskin's drawing, given at that place, of the view from the heights above Verona.]

are fossil-creatures, still so like the living creatures they were once, that there it first occurred to the human brain to imagine that the buried shapes were not mockeries of life, but had indeed once lived and died.

Under those white banks by the roadside was born, like a poor Italian gipsy, the Modern Science of Geology.[1]

8. Whether a member of the Royal Institution or not—if you are a member of any Institution of a social and civil character—you must look with still greater reverence on the grey moat, and on the wall that rises between you and the sun. The wall was chiefly built, the moat entirely excavated, by Can Grande della Scala;[2] and they represent typically the form of Defence which rendered it possible for the life and the arts of Citizens to be preserved and practised in an age of habitual war. Not only so—but this is the wall of the actual city which headed the great Lombard league[3]—which was the beginner of personal and independent power in the Italian nation, and the first banner-bearer, therefore, of all that has been vitally independent in religion and in art throughout the entire Christian world to this day.

4. The road ascends continually; the vine-clad slope on your right becoming steeper and prouder—the great wall drawing itself out, tower above tower,—and the blue of distant Lombardy flowing deep and deeper over its lower battlements. After walking the horses about a mile, there

[1] ["The study of organic fossils was first pursued with connexion and system in Italy. The hills which on each side skirt the mountain-range of the Apennines are singularly rich in remains of marine animals. When these remarkable objects drew the attention of thoughtful men, controversies soon arose whether they really were the remains of living creatures, or the productions of some capricious or mysterious power by which the forms of such creatures were mimicked. . . . As one of the first persons who applied a sound and vigorous intellect to these subjects, we may notice the celebrated painter, Leonardo da Vinci. . . . Going onwards with this view we may notice Fracostoro, who wrote concerning the petrifactions which were brought to light in the mountains of Verona, when, in 1517, they were excavated for the purpose of repairing the city" (Whewell's *History of the Inductive Sciences*, book xviii. ch i. section 2).]

[2] [Can Grande (Francesco della Scala) died 1329.]

[3] [Formed in 1167, on the initiative of the cities of the Veronese March, which had already made a league amongst themselves against the Emperor.]

is a level bit of road which brings you to the upper angle of the wall; and thence, looking down the northern descent, you may see a great round tower at the foot of it—not forked,—this, in battlements, but with embrasures for guns.

Now, the rock-banks under which you have passed were the cradle of modern science. The battlemented wall was the cradle of civic life. That low circular tower is the cradle of modern war and of all its desolation.[1] It is the first European tower for artillery: the beginning of fortification against gunpowder. The beginning, that is to say, of the end of *all* fortification; of the system which costs you fifteen millions a year, and leaves at this instant England without defence.

5. While you think of these things, let the horses go on quietly,—for the road now turns away from the city and still ascends—until, in another half hour, you will find yourself almost on a mountain summit, broken down into crags to the eastward, and grey—or grey-purple—with the lurid but lovely blue of the field Eryngium.[2] From this brow you may see entire Verona, and all the plain between Alp and Apennine; and so, if you please, we will find a place where the rocks are mossy, and sit down, and consider a little what this landscape of all the landscapes in the world has specially to say to us.

6. And, first, let us note exactly where we are. We may now see easily that we are on the point of a vast promontory or spur about ten miles long, thrown out from the Alps; and of which the last rock dies into the plain, exactly at that eastern gate of Verona out of which we came to climb it. Now this promontory is one of the sides of the great gate out of Germany into Italy, through which the Goths always entered: cloven up to Innspruck by the Inn; and down to Verona by the Adige. And by this gate not

[1] [Sammicheli, the father of the science of modern fortification, was born at Verona in 1484. A circular bastion (called the Bastione Boccare) had already been built there; he subsequently introduced—in the Bastione della Maddalena there—the triangular and pentangular bastion.]

[2] [Commonly known as "sea holly."]

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The Market Place, Verona

Look beyond its fretted outline, and you will see that in that direction the plain, elsewhere boundless, is ended by undulation of soft hills. Those are the Apennines above *Parma*. Then look to the left, and just beyond the roots of the Alps, you will see the cluster of the cones of the Euganean hills, and the space at their feet in which rests *Padua*, and the gleam of horizon beyond them in which rests *Venice*. Look, then, north-eastward, and, touched into a crown of strange rubies as the sun descends, there is the snowy cluster of the Alps of Friuli.

8. Then turn to the north-west, and under the sunset itself you will see the Adige flow from its enchanted porch of marble, and in one strong and almost straight stream, blanched always bright by its swiftness, reflecting on its eddies neither bank nor cloud but only light, stretch itself along among the vines, to the Verona lying at your feet: there first it passes the garden walls of the Church of St. Zeno, then under the battlements of the great bridge of the Scaligers, then passes away out of sight behind the hill on which, though among ghastly modern buildings, here and there you may still trace a grey fragment of tower and wall—the remnants of the palace of Theodoric of Verona—Dietrich of Bern.[1]

9. Now, I do not think that there is any other rock in all the world, from which the places, and monuments, of so complex and deep a fragment of the history of its ages can be visible, as from this piece of crag, with its blue and prickly weeds. For you have thus beneath you at once, the birthplaces of Virgil and of Livy,[2] the homes of Dante

[1] [The modern barracks (Castello S. Pietro) are on the site of the ancient castle (of which ruins are still visible) of the Ostrogoth Theodoric the Great (died 526), the "Dietrich of Bern" (*i.e.*, Verona) of the Niebelungen Lied: see "The School of Florence," § 13 (Vol. XX.).]

[2] [Virgil at Mantua, and Livy at Padua. Dante possessed a villa near Verona (Gargagnano), where he is said to have composed the *Purgatorio*; Petrarch lived at Arqua amongst the Euganean Hills; and the so-called "Tomb of Juliet" is shown at Verona: compare what Ruskin says in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 20, of the richness of association in the country between Verona and Venice. Mantegna was born at Vicenza; Titian at Cadore, behind "the Alps of Friuli" (§ 7); Correggio at the place of that name, between Mantua and Reggio.]

and Petrarch, and the source of the most sweet and pathetic inspiration to your own Shakespeare; the spot where the civilization of the Gothic kingdoms was founded on the throne of Theodoric, and where whatever was strongest in the Italian race redeemed itself into life by its league against Barbarossa. You have the cradle of natural science and medicine in the schools of Padua; the central light of Italian chivalry in the power of the Scaligers; the chief stain of Italian cruelty, in that of Ezzelin;[1] and, lastly, the birth-place of the highest art; for among these hills, or by this very Adige bank, were born Mantegna, Titian, Correggio, and Veronese.

10. Now, I hope some day to trace out a few threads of this history, especially that of the earlier times, unspeakably full of pathetic interest:[2] there are no tragedies like the tragedies of Verona under the Gothic and Lombard Kings. To-night, I shall keep to my poor old work, only among the Stones of Verona, instead of Venice. I cannot disentangle for you even the simplest of the inlaid threads of this tapestry of the fates of men that here lies beneath us, infinite like the purple of the great valley and the greater hills. But I can now mass it out for you in its broad design of light and darkness,—better, at least, than I was able to do twenty years ago, when I first tried to interpret the story of these cities of the plain.

11. You will find I have divided the drawings from Verona placed here to-night, into three separate series.[3] The first, of so-called Lombard architecture; the second, of Gothic; the third, of the early period of Revival, with its connected painting.

The first period—Lombard—extends to the end of the twelfth century; and is the expression of the introduction of Christianity into barbaric minds. Now, whatever

[1] [See *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 112 (Vol. XII. p. 137).]

[2] [Ruskin partly carried out this intention in his lecture on "The School of Florence," §§ 13 *seq.* (see Vol. XX.).]

[3] [See the headings in the Catalogue, below, pp. 449, 451, 457.]

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Study of a Capital, Verona

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we may think, a savage cannot be made a Christian at once; and this whole Lombardic period is not one of *Christianity*, but of Christianization.

You have next the Gothic period, Dante's time, lasting about two hundred years—from 1200 to 1400—(Dante beginning his poem exactly in the midst of it, in 1300). This is the period of vital Christianity, and of the development of the laws of chivalry, and forms of imagination, which are founded on Christianity.

Thirdly, you have the first period of the Revival in which the arts of Greece, and some of its religion, return, and join themselves to Christianity. They do not take away the sincerity of our religion, nor even its earnestness; but they make it poetical instead of practical.

The fourth period is that in which even this poetical Christianity expires. The arts become devoted to the pursuit of pleasure: and in that they perish, except where they are saved by a healthy naturalism, or domesticity.

But there is so much of good and evil in this period, including modern days,—so much truth in what Carlyle has said,[1] that we are saturated with hypocrisy,—and yet so much strength and life in the substance that is thus saturated,—that I will venture no positive general statement to you this evening.

I have only put one photograph from Raphael next to one from John Bellini,[2] to show you, in sharp contrast, the mediæval Christianity of which John Bellini, and the modern Christianity of which Raphael, are severally the most powerful interpreters.

12. (I.) Let me characterize these periods more distinctly.

The Lombardic period, that of Christianization, is one of savage but noble life gradually subjected to law. It is the forming of men, not out of clay, but out of splendid

[1] [See, e.g., *Life of Sterling*, ch. xv.: "the old spiritual highways and recognized paths to the Eternal, now all torn up and flung in heaps, submerged in unutterable boiling mud-oceans of Hypocrisy."]

[2] [The "Madonna della Seggiola" of Raphael, and a Madonna of Bellini. No. 50 in the Catalogue; below, p. 458.]

wild beasts, often as gentle as they are wild, but of unconquered animal nature. And all art of that date, in all countries, including our own Norman especially, is, in the inner heart of it, the subjection of savage or terrible, or wilful and wandering life, to a dominant law. It is government and conquest of fearful dreams. There is in it as yet no germ of true hope; only the conquest of evil, and the waking from darkness and terror.

The literature of it, as in Greece, is far in advance of art,[1] and is already full of the most tender and impassioned beauty, while the art is still grotesque and dreadful; but however wild, it is supreme above all others by its expression of governing law, and here at Verona is the very centre and utmost reach of that expression. I know nothing in architecture at once so exquisite, and so wild, and so strange, in the expression of self-conquest achieved almost in a dream.

18. For, observe, these barbaric races, educated in violence, chiefly in war and in hunting, cannot feel or see clearly, as they are gradually civilized, whether this element in which they have been brought up is evil or not. They *must* be good soldiers, and hunters,—that is their life; yet they know now that killing is evil, and they must not expect any more to find wild beasts to hunt in heaven. They have been trained by pain, by violence, by hunger and cold. They know there is a good in these things as well as an evil; they are perpetually hesitating between the one and other thought of them. But one thing is clear to them,—that killing and hunting, and every form of misery, of pleasure, and of passion, must somehow at last be subdued by law, which shall bring good out of it all, and which they feel more and more constraining them every hour.

14. Now if, with this sympathy, you look at their dragon and wild beast decoration,[2] you will find that it now

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 78.]

[2] [See Nos. 4 to 7 in the Catalogue (pp. 449, 450); and compare, again, "The School of Florence," § 22 (Vol. XX.).]

tells you about these Lombards far more than they could know of themselves. You may smile at my saying so: but all the actions, and much more the arts, of men tell to others, not only what the worker does not know, but what he never can know of himself, which you can only recognize by being in an element more advanced and wider than his.

And then also remember, even in deliberate symbolism, the question is always, as I have several times lately had to urge[1]—not what a symbol meant first, or meant elsewhere—but what it means now, and means here. Now this dragon symbol of the Lombards is used of course all over the world: it means good here, and evil there; sometimes means nothing, sometimes everything. You have always to ask what the man who here uses it means by it. Whatever is in his mind, that he is sure partly to express by it; nothing else than that can he at all express by it. An angel, to Angelico, is an angel indeed; to Correggio, it is a cupid; and a creature with eagle's wings and lion's limbs is, to a Hebrew, a cherub,—to a Lombard, a griffin.*

15. (II.) Now, in the second period which you may think of broadly as Dante's time, you have the highest development of Italian character and chivalry with an entirely believed Christian religion. You get therefore joy, and courtesy, and hope, and a lovely peace in death. And with these you have two fearful elements of evil. You have, first, such confidence in the virtue of the Creed, that men hate and persecute all who do not accept it. And, worse still, you find such confidence in the power of the Creed, that men not only can do anything that is wrong, and be themselves for a word of faith pardoned, but are even sure that after the wrong is done, God is sure to put it all right

* What it means, doubtful; but, on the whole, grim power conquering pain and temptation, the pillars of the church borne up by it.[2]

[1] [See *Queen of the Air*, §§ 1–8; above, pp. 295–303.]
[2] [Compare, yet again, "The School of Florence," § 21 (Vol. XX.).]

again for them, or even make things better than they were before.

16. Now, I need not point out to you how the spirit of persecution, as well as of vain hope founded on a creed only, is mingled in every line with the lovely moral teaching of the *Divina Commedia;* nor need I point out to you how, between the persecution of other people's creeds, and the absolution of one's own crimes, all Christian error is concluded.

But I will give you two most singular instances of both feelings, out of this Verona at our feet; for the power of the city in Italy rose and fell in the two centuries of the Christian period.

17. The founder of the power of the Scalas was Mastino,[1] a simple citizen, chosen first to be Podestà, and then Captain of Verona after the fall of Ezzelin.

He had been elected for his justice and sagacity, and he perished by his gentleness; being assassinated in private vengeance for his endeavour to end a family feud without blood. All his policy was wise and peaceful, and it is only as part of the fulfilment of his kindly purposes that we have this fact recorded of the civil powers underneath him.

"And because by the continuance of wars and civil discords, many great abuses and heresies had sprung up in the Veronese territory, it was determined in the Council to extirpate that bad root. And so in the year 1276, by command of the citizens in authority, the Bishop of Verona, and Brother Philip Bononcorsi, the Inquisitor of Mantua, with Master Pinamonte, the father of the said Inquisitor, and Podestà of Verona; and finally Master Albert della Scala, the brother and vicegerent of Master Mastino the Captain; went with a troop to Sirmione, Peninsula of the Lago di Garda, and proceeded in a brisk manner—*gagliardamente*—against these said heretics and

[1] [Mastino I. della Scala ruled from 1260 to 1277, Ezzelino da Romano having died in 1259; for other references to the latter, see Vol. VII. p. 347, Vol. XII. p. 137, Vol. XIV. p. 243.]

bad Christians, as well of Sirmione as of the surrounding villages and castles, in which they found a good hundred—*ben cento*, including both men and women, who were greatly faultful and incorrigible, and they had them all burned in the said place for an example to the others,—*Si fecero tutti in detto luogo abbrucciare per esempio degli altri.*"[1]

18. That, then, is the spirit in which the Gothic power is founded. And observe, the reason of its intense bitterness is, among many others, this chiefly—the fear of the disturbance of its hope after death.

And it is this hope, and the continual dwelling upon the conquest of death, and the rewards of faith, which distinctly mark the Christian time. The Lombard architecture, observe, expresses the triumph of law over passion; the Christian, that of hope over sorrow.

And the loveliness of building which was before given to churches only, now is given to tombs, not merely as shrines of saints, but as the dwelling-places of those who have fallen asleep. Hence it is that the tomb-buildings of Verona are permitted to stand among its palaces, and, side by side, the presence chambers of the living and the dead.

19. I have already had occasion to dwell enough on the beauty of this feeling.[2] I must now mark also the danger of its corruption.

The most splendid of the tombs, of which you will find various drawings in the next room, was built—as you all probably know—by Can Signorio della Scala, a prince who had in every way benefited and cared for the city; and among other minor gifts, bestowed on it one by which it profits to this day, the fountain of the great square. He was deeply religious; meditated constantly on his death,

[1] [Ruskin, as was his habit in visiting cities, went to the early local histories. This is a quotation from the earliest history of the Scaligers—*Le Historie e Fatti de Veronesi*, by Messer Torello Sarayna, Verona, 1542, p. 19. Compare *Dell' Istorie della Citta di Verona* (Venice, 1544), by Girolamo dalla Corte, vol. ii. pp. 22–23.]

[2] [See *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. pp. 246–247.]

and believed that he should be entirely happy in the next world, if only he were assured of the prosperity and secure reign of his children in this one.

Accordingly, "on the fourteenth day of September, 1375, knowing that his death drew near, he called to him his two dear friends, Master Guglielmo Bevilacqua and Master Tommaso de' Perigrini, with some of the first people of the city; and then he made come into his sight Bartolommeo and Antonio his sons, one fifteen years old and the other thirteen, and in the presence of these gentlemen he said to them, 'My sons, the love that I bear you is so great that by cause of it I fear I shall suffer some punishment after I am dead, wishing to leave you altogether lords; and if in this I have committed sin, may the Lord our God give me the punishment of it, which willingly I shall suffer, so that you may remain in prosperity. I am now leaving you a most fair state, noble and faithful; if you will be good and temperate, you will enjoy it a long time in stability; but if, on the contrary, you become vile, foolish, and discordant, it will be mutable and brief. Wherefore I command you as your lord, and pray you as a tender father, that you would be obedient to these gentlemen whom I have always loved, and under whose government and guardianship I leave you; and above the others I assign to you Master Gugliemo Builacqua here for a father in my room, and Master Tommasso Peregrini for tutor; and if you use their counsels, I have no doubt of your security, for I leave you besides a state enriched with every good; and above all things I recommend to you justice, and the fear of the Highest God, and the care of your people, to whom, if you are good and just and pitiful lords, they will be faithful to you.' Whereupon he kept silence, not being able to speak more for abundance of tears."[1]

20. The scene is a very touching one; but the fault of which Can Signorio thus prepared himself to bear the punishment, had severe penalty, even in the world he left.

[1] [Sarayna, p. 40 (and compare Corte, vol. ii. pp. 275–276).]

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Upper Part of the Tomb of Can Signorio, Verona

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The Tomb of Can Grande, Verona.

It was the murder of his two brothers; the second of whom he sent orders to kill in prison, from this very deathbed, after he had dismissed his children. And the end of all was, that one of these children murdered the other, and was driven himself from the throne—so ending the dynasty of the Scalas.

21. Now of course your first impulse—when you know the whole story—is to think the man's entire character assumed. It was *not* assumed; and the great lesson we have to learn from him is the boundless possibility of self-deception in religious bigotry, especially in Christian bigotry: for Christianity is a religion of mercy and truth, and when it is corrupt it corrupts into its reverse; and there is no cruelty like the cruelty of Christians, and no fallacy like their falsehood. We fancy we are so very sincere ourselves; but the Christian avarice of London commits more murders in a day, than the worst Christian ambition of the Scalas did in their two centuries of power at Verona.

22. Well, we won't end the Gothic time with Can Signorio. Here is the tomb of that pious person:[1]—but here is the tomb of a good knight and true,[2] living, I think, the busiest and the brightest life that you can find in the annals of chivalry.

His contemporary, Castruccio Castracani,[3] whose sword was given to the present King of Italy at Lucca, was as brave and energetic, but yet selfish and cold in temper compared to the Great Dog of the Scalas—Cane Francesco, —*Belligero terribile, et robusto.*[4]

First he won his wife, Joanna, by a *coup de main;* he fell in love with her when she was a girl, in Rome; then, she was going to be sent into Scotland to be married;

[1] [No. 30 in the Catalogue; below, p. 455. The upper part of the tomb is Plate XXII. here.]

[2] [Can Grande: see Plate XXIII. here, and in the Catalogue, Nos. 21 and 22 (below, p. 454).]

[3] [For Castruccio Castracani, Duke of Lucca, see Vol. XII. pp. 224–225. For another reference to the gift of his sword by the people of Lucca to King Victor Emanuel, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 18, where Ruskin mentions Mrs. Browning's poem, "The Sword of Castruccio Castracani," upon the incident.]

[4] [Sarayna, p. 14.]

but she had to go through Verona, to the Adige gate. So Can Grande pounced upon her; declared she was much too precious a gem—*preziosa gemma*—to be sent to Scotland, and—she went no farther. Then he fortified, as I told you, Verona against the Germans; dug the great moat out of its rocks; built its wall and towers; established his court of royal and thoughtful hospitality; became the chief Ghibelline captain of Lombardy, and the receiver of noble exiles from all other states; possessed himself by hard fighting of Vicenza also; then of Padua; then, either by strength or subtlety, of Feltre,—Belluno,—Bassano; and died at 37,—of eating apples when he was too hot,—in the year 1329.

23. (III.) And now, thirdly, we come to the period when classical literature and art were again known in Italy, and the painters and sculptors, who had been gaining steadily in power for two hundred years,—power not of practice merely, but of race also,—with every circumstance in their favour around them, received their finally perfect instruction both in geometrical science, in that of materials, and in the anatomy and action of the human body. Also, the people about them,—the models of their work,—had been perfected in personal beauty by chivalric war; in imagination, by a transcendental philosophy; in practical intellect, by stern struggle for civic law; and by commerce, not in falsely-made, or vile, or unclean things, but in lovely things, beautifully and honestly made. And now, therefore, you get out of all the world's long history since it was peopled by men till now—you get just fifty years of perfect work. Perfect. It is a strong word. It is also a *true* one. The doing of these fifty years is unaccusably Right, as art. What its sentiment may be—whether too great or too little—whether superficial or sincere, is another question; but as artists' work, it admits no conception of anything better. It is true that in the following age, founded on the absolutely stern rectitude of this, there came a phase of gigantic power, and of exquisite ease and felicity, which possess an awe and a charm of

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Details from the Tomb of Can Grande, Verona

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their own. They are just as insuperable, and they are more inimitable, than the work of the perfect School. But they are not *perfect*. It is a most subtle question whether the greater manifestation of power in them indicate greater inherent power or not.

24. I am not able—no man, unless one of their equals, would be able—to tell you, whether there is really more strength in Gainsborough, who can draw a mouth with one undulatory sweep of his pencil—or in Carpaccio, who will take half-an-hour at least to do apparently little more. But I can tell you positively that Carpaccio's work is faultless.[1] When done, it is a mouth; and a perfect one; whereas Gainsborough's is only a lovely streak of vermilion, which looks like a mouth a little way off.

25. Now it is very difficult to find a name for this wonderful fifty years' space. You cannot call it classical, for its style differs in all kinds of ways from the time antique. Still less can you call it Christian, for its direct inspiration is entirely Heathen. You cannot name it from any king; for no king at this time was worthy of the age; and you cannot name it from any one Art Master, for twenty masters were equally worthy of it at once. So I shall call it simply the Age of the Masters.[2] Fifty years, mind you. I cannot name half their great workmen for you, but these are the greatest of them—Luini, Leonardo, John Bellini, Vettor Carpaccio, Andrea Mantegna, Andrea Verrocchio, Cima da Conegliano, Perugino, and in date—though only in his earlier life belonging to the school—Raphael. But you may best recollect the great fifty years as the prime of the life of three men:—John Bellini, born 1426, died at 90, in 1516; Mantegna, born 1430, died at 76, in 1506; and Vettor Carpaccio,—the date of his birth is unknown, but he died about 1522.

26. Now, observe, the object of these masters is wholly different from that of the former school. The central

[1] [For Ruskin's "discovery" of Carpaccio in 1869, see Vol. IV. p. 356 *n.*]
[2] [Compare *The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, §§ 8–13.]

Gothic men always want chiefly to impress you with the facts of their subject; but the masters of this finished time desire only to make everything dainty, delightful, and perfect. We have not many pictures of the class in England, but several have been of late added to the National Gallery;[1] and the Perugino there, especially the compartment with Raphael and Tobit, and the little St. Jerome by John Bellini, will perfectly show you this main character—pictorial perfectness and deliciousness—sought before everything else. You will find, if you look into that St. Jerome, that everything in it is exquisite, complete, and pure; there is not a particle of dust in the cupboards nor of cloud in the air; the wooden shutters are dainty, the candlesticks are dainty, the saint's scarlet hat is dainty, and its violet tassel, and its riband, and his blue cloak, and his spare pair of shoes, and his little brown partridge;—it is all a perfect quintessence of innocent luxury—absolute delight, without one drawback in it, nor taint of the Devil anywhere.

I don't quite know another picture like it except a Nativity by Luini belonging to the present Count Borromeo;[2] —it is a picture about the same size, painted rather more slightly than Luini's usual work in oil, and with a felicity of heart that wholly refuses to see anything grave in this Nativity; it is a bright fable of perfect joy, and heaven come down to earth; the Madonna is not worshipping the child, but merely holding it and gazing at it, her face lost in one sweet satisfied rapture of mere love. She is going to lay it in the manger,—and because the straw is out of order, two exquisite little cherubs with ruby wings are shaking it up.

[1] [The date was 1869–1870, when among other recent acquisitions were the "Raphael and Tobias" (School of Verrocchio), No. 781; and "St. Anthony and St. George" by Vittore Pisano, No. 776. The Perugino is No. 288 (for other references to it, see Vol. XV. p. 170 *n.*); the "St. Jerome" (now ascribed to Catena) is No. 694.]

[2] [At that time Count Giberto Borromeo, whose acquaintance Ruskin made at Venice in 1869, and whom he afterwards visited at Milan. The picture described is in the Museo Borromeo at Milan.]

27. Well; for other pictures of this class, there were two exquisite ones in the Winter Academy,—a little Narcissus by Luini, and the Peter Martyr by John Bellini;[1] the last very valuable, because you saw in a moment the main characteristic of the school,—that it mattered not in the least to John, and that he doesn't expect it to matter to you, whether people are martyred or not, so long as one can make a pretty grey of their gowns, and a nice white of their sleeves, and infinite decoration of forest leaves behind, and a divine picture at last out of all. Everything in the world was done and made only that it might be rightly painted—that is the true master's creed.[2]

28. I used to think all this very wrong once[3] and that it meant general falseness and hardness of heart, and so on. It means nothing of the kind. It means only that one's whole soul is put into one's work; and that the entire soul so spent is healthy and happy, and cannot vex itself with questions, cares, or pains.

29. And now I have only a few words more to say about a very different subject.

I asked you to come to-night that I might talk to you about Verona and its rivers. There is but one at Verona; nevertheless, Dante connects its name with that of the Po, when he says of the whole of Lombardy—

> "In sul Paese, che Adige e Pò riga,
> Solea valore e cortesia trovarsi,
> Prima che Federigo avesse briga."[4]

I want to speak for a minute or two about those great rivers; because in the efforts that are now being made to

[1] [The Old Masters Exhibition of 1870 contained No. 113, "Narcissus" by Luini (lent by Lady Taunton), and No. 146, "Peter Martyr" by Bellini (lent by Lady Eastlake). The latter picture was afterwards presented to the National Gallery (No. 812); for other references to it, see, in Vol. XXI., *Lectures on Landscape*, §§ 11, 77, 94, and *The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 13.]

[2] [Compare the contrast drawn in the lecture on "Modern Art" between "constant" and "dramatic" art; above, p. 203.]

[3] [See, for instance, such a passage as that in *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 122 (Vol. XII. p. 145).]

[4] [*Purgatorio*, xvi. 115–117; compare *Val d'Arno*, §§ 2, 3, where the passage is quoted and commented upon.]

restore some of its commerce to Venice,[1] precisely the same questions are being debated which, again and again, ever since Venice was a city, have put her senate at pause—namely, how to hold in check the continually advancing morass formed by the silt brought down by the Alpine rivers.

80. Is it not strange that, for at least six hundred years, the Venetians have been contending with those great rivers —at their *mouths*, that is to say, where their strength has become wholly irresistible; and never once thought of contending with them at their sources, where their infinitely separated streamlets might be—and are meant by heaven to be—ruled, as easily as children?[2] And observe how sternly, how constantly, the place where they are to be governed is marked by the mischief done by their liberty. Consider what the advance of the delta of the Po in the Adriatic signifies among the Alps. The evil of the delta itself, however great, is as nothing in comparison of the mischief which is in its origin. The gradual destruction of the harbourage of Venice, the endless cost of delaying it, the malaria of the whole coast down to Ravenna, nay, the raising of the bed of the Po, to the imperilling of all Lombardy, are but secondary evils. Every acre of that increasing delta means *the devastation of part of an Alpine valley, and the loss of so much fruitful soil and ministering rain.* Some of you now present must have passed this year through the valleys of the Toccia and Ticino. You know, therefore, the devastation that was caused there, as well as in the valley of the Rhone, by the great floods of 1868, and that ten years of labour, even if the peasantry had still the heart for labour, cannot redeem those districts into fertility. What you have there seen on a vast

[1] [The deepening of the "ports" or deep channel entrances through the *lidi* and other improvements have, since 1870, restored considerable commercial prosperity to Venice, which is now second only to Trieste among the seaports of the Adriatic. The progress may be traced in the Consular Reports issued by the British Foreign Office; for an account of the lagoons and the channels, with map, see H. F. Brown's *Life on the Lagoons*.]

[2] [Compare Ruskin's letters given in the Introduction; above, p. lvi.]

scale, takes place to a certain extent during every summer thunderstorm, and from the ruin of some portion of fruitful land, the dust descends to increase the marshes of the Po.

31. But observe farther,—whether fed by sudden melting of snow, or by storm, every destructive rise of the Italian rivers signifies the loss of so much power of irrigation on the south side of the Alps. You must all well know the look of their chain, seen from Milan or Turin late in summer,—how little snow is left, except on Monte Rosa; how vast a territory of brown mountain-side, heated and barren, without rocks, yet without forest. There is in that brown-purple zone, and along the flanks of every valley that divides it, another Lombardy of cultivable land; and every drift of rain that swells the mountain torrents, if it were caught where it falls, is more truly rain of gold than fell in the tower of Danaë.[1] But we seek gold beneath the rocks; and we will not so much as make a trench along the hill-side to catch it when it falls from heaven; and where, if not so caught, it changes into a frantic monster, first ravaging hamlet and field in fury, and then sinking, along the shores of Venice, into poisoned sleep. Think what that belt of the Alps might be—up to four thousand feet above the plain—if the system of terraced irrigation, which even half-savage nations discovered and practised long ago, in China and in Borneo, and by which our own engineers have subdued districts of farthest India, were but in part also practised here,—here, in the oldest and proudest centre of European arts, where Leonardo da Vinci—master among the masters—first discovered the laws of the coiling clouds and wandering streams,[2] so that to this day his engineering remains unbettered by modern science;[3] and yet in this centre

[1] [For the legend of Danaë, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 184–185 *n.*).]

[2] [Compare Ruskin's note on No. 17 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue (above, p. 272).]

[3] [Leonardo's work as an engineer and inventor is the subject of an interesting chapter in M. Eugène Muntz's *Leonardo da Vinci: Artist, Thinker, and Man of Science*, vol. ii. pp. 45 *seq.*]

of all human achievements of genius, no thought has been taken to receive with sacred art these great gifts of quiet snow and flying rain. Think, I repeat, what that south slope of the Alps might be; one paradise of lovely pasture and avenued forest of chestnut and blossomed trees, and cascades, docile and innocent as infants, laughing all summer long from crag to crag and pool to pool, and the Adige and the Po, the Dora and the Ticino, no more defiled, no more alternating between fierce flood and venomous languor, but in calm, clear currents, bearing ships to every city, and health to every field of all that azure plain of Lombard Italy.

82. Now I know that you come to the Royal Institution that you may pass, if it may be, a pleasant evening, and that I have no right to tease you with economical or philanthropical projects:—but thinking of you now as indulgent friends, with whom I am grateful to be allowed to begin, as you know I first in public begin to-day, work involving no small responsibility,[1] you will not think it wrong in me to tell you that it has now become a most grave object with me to get some of the great pictures of the Italian schools into England, and that I think at this time, with good help, it might be contrived. Farther, without in the least urging my plans impatiently on any one else, I know thoroughly that this which I have said *should* be done for the Italian rivers—*can* be done, and that no method of employment of our idle able-bodied labourers would in the end be more remunerative, or in the beginnings of it more healthful and every way beneficial, than with the concurrence of the Italian and Swiss governments, setting them to redeem the valleys of the Ticino and the Rhone. And I pray you to think of this; for I tell you truly,—you who love Italy, that both her passions and her mountain streams are noble; but that her happiness depends, not on the Liberties, but the right *Government* of both.

[1] [The work of the Slade Professorship at Oxford.]

Drawings and Photographs, illustrative of the Architec of Verona, shown at the Royal Institution, Feb. 1870

SECTION I. (Nos. 1 to 7).—LOMBARD

1. Porch of the Church of St. Zeno. (Photograph.)

   Of the twelfth century.[1]

2. Porch of the South Entrance of the Duomo.

   Probably of the tenth or eleventh century, and highly remark for the wildness of its grotesque or monstrous sculpture, w has been most carefully rendered by the draughtsman, Bunney.

   It will save space to note that the sketches by my two n skilful and patient helpers, Mr. A. Burgess and Mr. Bun will be respectively marked (*A.*) and (*B.*), and my own (

3. Porch of the Western Entrance of the Duomo. (Photograph.)

   Later in date — but still of twelfth or very early thirtee century.

   Details of it are given in the next drawings.

4. Griffin (I keep the intelligible old English spelling) sustain the Pillar on the North Side of the Porch seen in No (*R.*)[2]

   Painted last summer.

   I engraved his head and breast, seen from the other side, in plate of "True and False Griffins," in *Modern Painters.* C the back of the head and neck of the small dragon he h in his fore-claws can be seen from this side.

[1] [This photograph was afterwards placed in the Ruskin Art Collection at Ox (Reference Series, No. 69). It is reproduced as Plate I. in Vol. XX. (*An Pentelici*).]

[2] [For this subject, see § 14 of the lecture (above, p. 437). The drawing is No in the Educational Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). The engraving of the griffi in Vol. V. p. 140. The earlier sketch of the griffin (from which, probably, engraving was prepared) was No. 6 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue: see above, p. Ruskin refers to his drawing of 1869 in a letter to his mother of June 22: see Introduction (above, p. li.).]

5. Capital of the Pillar sustained by the Griffin, of which the Base is seen in No. 4. (*A.*)

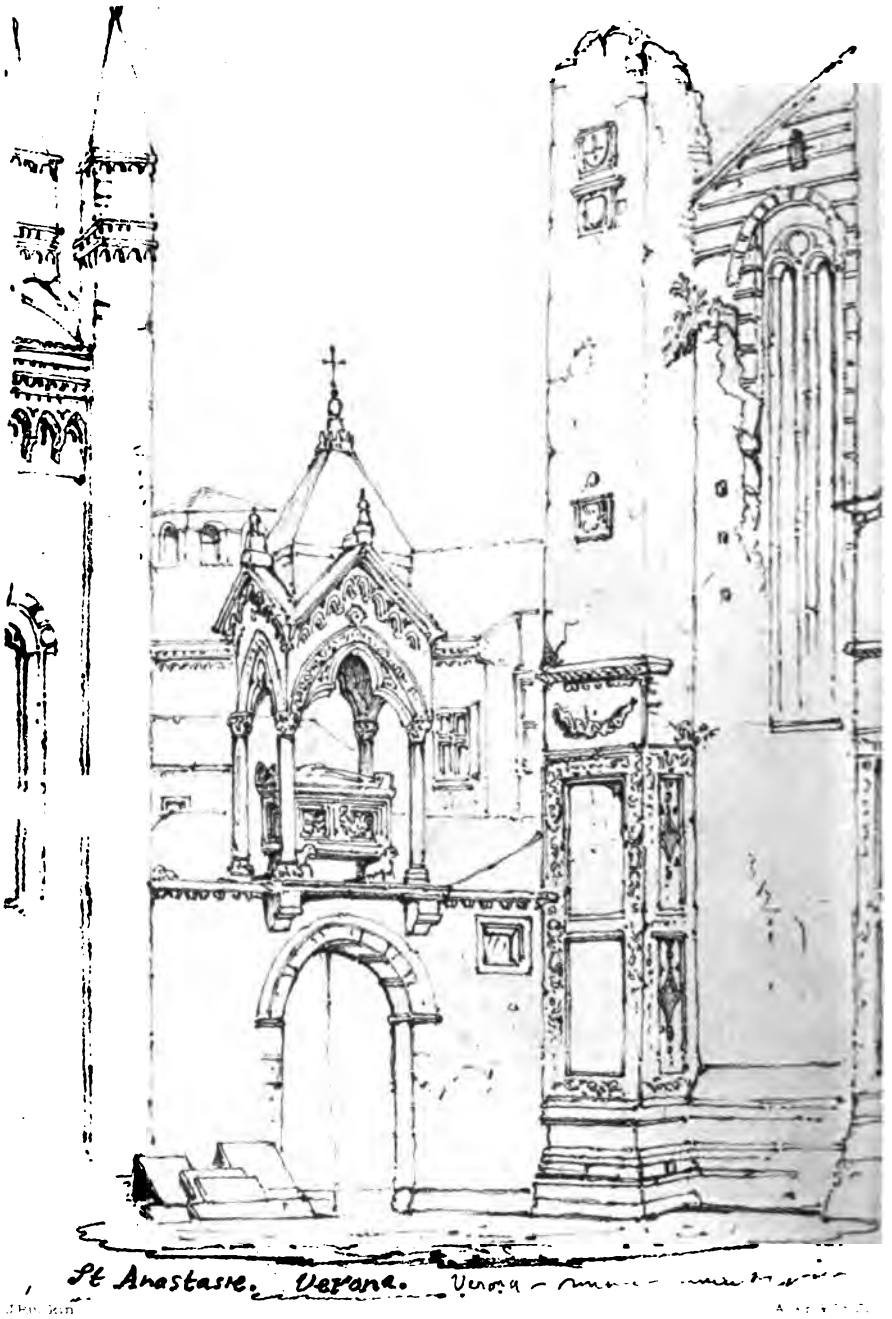
First-rate sculpture of the time, and admirably drawn.

6. Portion of Decorative Lombardic Moulding from the South Side of the Duomo. (*A.*)

Showing the peculiar writhing of the branched tracery with a serpentine flexure—altogether different from the springing lines of Gothic ornament. It would be almost impossible to draw this better; it is much more like the real thing than a cast would be.

7. Lion, with Dragon in its Claws, of Lombardic Sculpture (now built into a wall at Venice); above it, Head of one of the Dogs which support the Tomb of Can Grande, at Verona. (*R.*)

The lion, in its emaciated strength, and the serpent, with its vital writhe and deadly reverted bite, are both characteristic of the finest Lombard work. The dog's head is fourteenth-century Gothic—a masterpiece of broad, subtle, easy sculpture, getting expression with every touch, and never losing the least undulation of surface, while it utterly disdains the mere imitation of hair, or attainment of effect by deep cutting.



The Castelbarco Tomb, Verona
(1835)

SECTION II. (Nos. 8 to 38).—GOTHIC

8. North Porch of the Church of St. Fermo. Thirteenth century. (*B.*)

Mr. Bunney's drawing is so faithful and careful as almost to enable the spectator to imagine himself on the spot. The details of this porch are among the most interesting in the Gothic of Italy,[1] but I was obliged, last year, to be content with this general view, taken in terror of the whole being "restored"; and with the two following drawings.

9. Base of the Central Pillar. North Porch, St. Fermo. (*B.*)

In facsimile, as nearly as possible, and of the real size, to show the perpetual variety in the touch; and in the disposition and size of the masses.

10. Shaft-Capitals of the Interior Arch of the North Porch, St. Fermo. (*B.*)

Contrived so that, while appearing symmetrical, and even monotonous, not one lobe of any of the leaves shall be like another. Quite superb in the original, but grievously difficult to draw, and losing, in this sketch, much of their grace.

11. Western Door of the Church of St. Anastasia, with the Tomb of the Count of Castelbarco on the Left, over the Arch. (Photograph.)[2]

In the door, its central pillar, carved lintels and encompassing large pointed arch, with its deep mouldings and flanking shafts, are of the finest Veronese thirteenth-century work. The two minor pointed arches are of the fourteenth century. The flanking pilasters, with double panels and garlands above, are the beginning of a façade intended to have been erected in the fifteenth century.

[1] [This drawing now hangs in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford. For a note on the porch, see Ruskin's letter to his mother of June 25; Introduction, p. lii.]

[2] [Compare Ruskin's early drawing: Plate XXV. here.]

The Count of Castelbarco, the Chancellor of Can Grande della Scala, died about the year 1330, and his tomb cannot be much later in date.

The details of this group of buildings are illustrated under the numbers next in series.

12. Pillars and Lintels of the Western Door of St. Anastasia. (Photograph.)

The sculpture of the lintel is first notable for its concise and intense story of the Life of Christ.

1. The Annunciation. (Both Virgin and Angel kneeling.)
2. The Nativity.
3. The Epiphany. (Chosen as a sign of life giver to the Gentiles.)
4. Christ bearing His Cross. (Chosen as a sign of His personal life in its entirety.)
5. The Crucifixion.
6. The Resurrection.

Secondly. As sculpture, this lintel shows all the principal features of the characteristic thirteenth-century design of Verona.

Diminutive and stunted figures; the heads ugly in features, stern in expression; but the drapery exquisitely disposed in minute but not deep-cut folds.

13. The Angels on the Left Hand of the Subject of the Resurrection in No. 12. (*A.*)

Drawn of its actual size, excellently.

The appearance of fusion and softness in the contours is not caused by time, but is intentional, and reached by great skill in the sculptor, faithfully rendered in the drawing.

14. Sketch of the Capital of the Central Pillar in No. 12. (*R.*)

(With slight notes of a sixteenth-century bracket of a street balcony on each side.)

Drawn to show the fine curvatures and softness of treatment in Veronese sculpture of widely separated periods.

15. Unfinished Sketch of the Castelbarco Tomb, seen from one of the Windows of the Hotel of the "Two Towers." (*R.*)[1]

That inn was itself one of the palaces of the Scaligers; and the traveller should endeavour always to imagine the effect of the little Square of Sta. Anastasia when the range of its

[1] [This is possibly the drawing which was No. 218 in the Ruskin Exhibition at the Water-Colour Society, 1901.]

buildings was complete; the Castelbarco Tomb on one side, this Gothic palace on the other, and the great door of the church between. The masonry of the canopy of this tomb was so locked and dove-tailed that it stood balanced almost without cement; but of late, owing to the permission given to heavily loaded carts to pass continually under the archway, the stones were so loosened by the vibration that the old roof became unsafe, and was removed, and a fine smooth one of trimly cut white stone substituted, while I was painting the rest of the tomb, against time.[1] Hence the unfinished condition of my sketch—the last that can ever be taken of the tomb as it was built.

16. The Castelbarco Tomb, seen Laterally. (*B.*)

A most careful drawing, leaving little to be desired in realization of the subject. It is taken so near the tomb as to make the perspective awkward, but I liked this quaint view better than more distant ones.

The drawing of the archway, and of the dark grey and red masonry of the tomb is very beautiful.

17. Lion with Hind in its Claws. (*A.*)

The support of the sarcophagus, under the feet of the recumbent figure in the Castelbarco Tomb.

18. Lion with Dragon in its Claws. (*A.*)

The support of the sarcophagus at the head of the figure.[2]

19. St. Luke. (*A.*)

Sculpture of one of the four small panels at the angles of the sarcophagus in the Castelbarco Tomb. I engraved the St. Mark for the illustration of noble grotesque in the *Stones of Venice*.[3] But this drawing more perfectly renders the stern touch of the old sculptor.

20. Two of the Spurs of the Bases of the Nave Pillars in the Church of St. Anastasia. (*A.*)

Of the real size. Not generally seen in the darkness of the Church, and very fine in their rough way.

[1] [See the passages from Ruskin's letters to his mother given above; Introduction, p. xlix.]

[2] [The position of these details, again, may be seen in Plate XXV.]

[3] [Plate III. in the third volume (in this edition Vol. XI. p. 150).]

21. Tomb of Can Grande, General View. (*R.*)

Put together some time since, from photograph and sketches taken in the year 1852; and inaccurate, but useful in giving a general idea.[1]

22. Tomb of Can Grande. (*R.*)

Sketch made carefully on the spot last year. The sarcophagus unfinished; the details of it would not go into so small a space.[2]

23. The Sarcophagus and Recumbent Statue of Can Grande, Drawn Separately. (*R.*)

Sketched on the spot last year. Almost a faultless type of powerful and solemn Gothic sculpture. (Can Grande died in 1329.[3])

24. The Two Dogs. (*R.*)

The kneeling Madonna and sculpture of right-hand upper panel of the Sarcophagus of Can Grande.

The drawing of the panel is of real size, representing the Knight at the Battle of Vicenza.[4]

25. The Cornice of the Sarcophagus of Can Grande. (*A.*)

Of its real size, admirably drawn, and quite showing the softness and Correggio-like touch of its leafage, and its symmetrical formality of design, while the flow of every leaf is changeful.

26. Study of the Sarcophagus of the Tomb of Mastino II., Verona. (*R.*)

Sketched in 1852.

27. Head of the Recumbent Statue of Mastino II. (*A.*)

Beautifully drawn by Mr. Burgess.

Can Mastino II. had three daughters:—Madonna Beatrice (called afterwards "the Queen," for having "tutte le grazie che i cieli ponno concedere a femina," and always simply called by historians Lady "Reina" della Scala), Madonna Alta-luna,

[1] [No. 8 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue: see above, p. 270. For notes on Can Grande, see § 22 of the lecture (above, p. 441).]

[2] [No. 57 in the Reference Series at Oxford.]

[3] [No. 77 in the Educational Series. Plate XXIII. here is made up from the two drawings, Nos. 22 and 23 (see above, p. lxxviii.).]

[4] [These drawings were Plates 7 and 8 in "Verona, and its Rivers"; here Plate XXIV.]

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33. Bracket under Sarcophagus of Giovanni della Scala. (*A.*)

Characteristic of the finest later treatment of flowing foliage.

34. Part of the Front of the Ducal Palace, Venice. (*R.*)

Sketched, in 1852, by measurement, with extreme care; and showing the sharp window traceries, which are rarely seen in photographs.[1]

35. Angle of the Ducal Palace, looking Seaward from the Piazzetta. (*R.*)[2]

Sketched last year (restorations being threatened) merely to show the way in which the light is let through the edges of the angle by penetration of the upper capital, and of the foliage in the sculpture below; so that the mass may not come unbroken against the sky.

36. Photograph of the Angle Capital of Upper Arcade seen in No. 34.

Showing the pierced portions, and their treatment.

37–38. Capitals of the Upper Arcade.

Showing the grandest treatment of architectural foliage attained by the fourteenth-century masters; massive for all purposes of support; exquisitely soft and refined in contour, and faultlessly composed.[3]

[1] [From the description, this drawing would seem to be the same as No. 67 in the Reference Series at Oxford (reproduced in Vol. IV. p. 306), as in the catalogue of that collection Ruskin notes the careful drawing of the traceries, which "cannot be photographed from this point of view." But he there gives the date as 1845.]

[2] [Reproduced in Vol. X. p. 358.]

[3] [Compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 429).]

J. Ruskin

Allen & Co. Sc.

The Piazza dei Signori, Verona
(1869)

SECTION III.—TIME OF "THE MASTERS"

39. STUDY OF THE TOP OF THE PILASTER NEXT THE CASTELBARCO TOMB. (*R.*)

The wild fig leaves are unfinished; for my assistant having unfortunately shown his solicitude for their preservation too energetically to some street boys who were throwing stones at them, they got a ladder, and rooted them up the same night. The purple and fine-grained white marbles of the pilaster are entirely uninjured in surface by three hundred years' exposure. The coarse white marble above has mouldered, and is grey with lichens.

40. STUDY OF THE BASE OF THE SAME PILASTER, AND CONNECTED FAÇADE. (*R.*)[1]

Showing the effect of differently coloured marbles arranged in carefully unequal masses.

41. INTERIOR COURT OF THE DUCAL PALACE OF VENICE, WITH GIANT'S STAIR. (*R.*)[2]

Sketched in 1841, and perhaps giving some characters which more finished drawing would lose.

42. THE PIAZZA D'ERBE, VERONA. (*R.*)[3]

Sketched in 1841, showing general effect and pretty grouping of the later Veronese buildings.

43. PIAZZA DE' SIGNORI, VERONA. (*R.*)[4]

Sketched last year. Note the bill advertising Victor Hugo's *Homme qui rit*, pasted on the wall of the palace.

The great tower is of the Gothic time. Note its noble sweep of delicately ascending curves sloped inwards.

[1] [A brilliant sketch in water-colour; now No. 68 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). The drawing was once exhibited at the Old Water-Colour Society (where it was hung upside down!). It was No. 310 at the Ruskin Exhibition, Manchester, 1904. The position of the pilaster may be seen in Plate XXV. here.]

[2] [Reproduced in Vol. IV. p. 40.]

[3] [No. 62 in the Reference Series at Oxford; here Plate XX.]

[4] [The "(R.)" is now added. The sketch (here reproduced, Plate XXVI.) is No. 80 in the Reference Series in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford.]

44. Gate of Ruined School of St. John, Venice. (Photograph.)

Exquisite in floral sculpture, and finish of style.

45. Hawthorn Leaves, from the Base of Pilaster, in the Church of St. Maria de' Miracoli, Venice. (*R.*)

In the finest style of floral sculpture. It cannot be surpassed for perfectness of treatment; especially for the obtaining of life and softness, by broad surfaces and fine grouping.

46. Bas-relief from one of the Inner Doors of the Ducal Palace.

Very noble, and typical of the pure style.

47. St. John Baptist and other Saints. (Cima da Conegliano.)

Consummate work; but the photograph, though well taken, darkens it terribly.[1]

48. Meeting of Joachim and Anna. (*Vettor Carpaccio.*) (Photograph.)

49. Madonna and Saints. (*John Bellini.*) Portrait. (Mantegna.)[2]

(Photographs.)

50. Madonna. (*John Bellini.*)[3]

With Raphael's "Della Seggiola." Showing the first transition from the style of the "Masters" to that of modern times.

The Photographs in the above series are all from the Pictures themselves.

[1] [Probably the photograph afterwards placed in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford: No. 8 in the Standard Series.]

[2] [Probably the photographs which are now in frames, Nos. 5 and 36 in the Standard Series at Oxford; compare *Lectures on Art*, § 183.]

[3] [Now No. 37 in the same series. For a note on these examples, see § 11 of the lecture (above, p. 435) and compare *Lectures on Art*, § 183.]

APPENDIX

REPORTS OF ADDRESSES ON ART

(1861–1868)

I. ARCHITECTURE IN FRANCE (1861)

II. COMPETITION AND MECHANICAL ART (1865)

III. THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL OF ART (1868)

I

ARCHITECTURE IN FRANCE[1]

1. MR. J. RUSKIN, having been called upon by the Chairman,[2] said he should hardly venture to accept the invitation to address the meeting; for almost every member of the Society knew better than he did what was going on, both in France and England; many of them from personal knowledge, and some from professional engagements. He felt the difficulty all architects and other persons were placed in who had any connection with the restoration of ancient buildings. They ought not to throw stones at anybody, but what they should do was to suggest what should be done to ancient buildings under the most difficult circumstances. He himself for long had been utterly hopeless respecting the state of architecture in France—hopeless, especially because he felt that the line taken there was, that what was determined by the leading public men there would be carried out, and that any suggestion which might be made to those engaged in that course was likely to wound their vanity, and was likely to come ungracefully from us, who had not altogether shown ourselves prudent, or sufficiently cautious, perhaps, in the restorations we had undertaken at home.

2. He felt it was a great difficulty to interfere, and one great difficulty was the weakness of the French, which he supposed they would confess to themselves, which all nations shared with them—but which, perhaps, they would admit they possessed at all events, and which frequently led them to nobleness of action, as at Magenta and Solferino—he meant national vanity. So it might be in reference to the restoration of French architecture. He was afraid they would do harm if they brought forward any memorial on the subject to be presented to the French, unless they could show that they had a good ground for doing so. Ten years ago, he made the tour of the cathedral towns of France.[3] He

[1] [Remarks addressed to the Ecclesiological Society on June 13, 1861. Reported in the *Building News*, June 21, 1861. The report was reprinted in *Igdrasil* for December 1891, vol. iii. pp. 176–178, and also in the privately-issued *Ruskiniana*, 1892, part ii. pp. 197–199. The paragraphs are here numbered for convenience of reference.]

[2] [Mr. A. J. B. Beresford-Hope.]

[3] [In 1849 Ruskin made a tour of Normandy. In 1850, on his way back from Venice, he visited Avignon, Orange, Valence, Vienne, Lyons, and Bourges: see the Introductions to Vol. VIII. and Vol. IX.]

should have remarked, however, that twenty years ago the cathedrals of France were all safe, as far as modern work was concerned; and, as a lover of architecture, he mourned over the restorations now being made in France of her ecclesiastical buildings. There was, twenty years ago, nothing of importance undertaken in the way of restoration, but ten years after that things were changed, and the traveller at Amiens, Chartres, Notre Dame, and other places—in fact, wherever he went, he had to get out of the way of horses and carts filled with stone and other building materials, to carry on alterations then being proceeded with, but none of them finished, and the structures being full of scaffolding. Although he deprecated the adoption of any memorial to the French authorities on the subject of restoration, yet he thought they might wisely and courteously suggest, that when a restoration had been commenced it should be carried on and gone through, instead of scaffolding being kept up at buildings under restoration for so great a length of time. If he wished to send a pupil to study a French cathedral, at present he hardly knew where to send him, the buildings being enveloped in so much scaffolding.

3. Then an important matter for them in England was certainly for them to settle their own code of restoration. Could they go to France and give their neighbours their advice, while they were not agreed themselves as to what should be done in the way of the restoration of a building? They, many of them, differed in opinion as to the mode of restoration, and he referred particularly to the difference of opinion as to what should be done with sculpture. What he had proposed was considered extravagant and impracticable. The whole ecclesiastical architecture of France, however, was likely to be destroyed by one perpetual scrape, and thus would be removed the power of making an architectural history of the country. He wanted to know something of the thirteenth century, because it was his intention to write a history of the thirteenth-century architecture;[1] and ten years ago he set to work on the French churches, and found that all his important documents were then in part destroyed, and that in five years more they would be destroyed. He accordingly gave the thing up, and not only that, but he gave up architecture—he never cared about architecture since. It was a hopeless thing, he thought. He stood forward honestly and earnestly that night as an advocate against the destruction of buildings, under the name of restoring them;[2] but, at the same time, deprecated any over-zeal in the way of sending a memorial to the French, until they had come to some decided opinion on the subject themselves.

4. What it seemed, therefore, they had to do was to determine, first, whether they at present, as architects generally, had the power of restoring effectually to its former appearance any great ecclesiastical building, and whether, if they had the power of doing so, it was expedient to do so, and to what degree. That it was right to put a stone in here and a bolt in there, to take care that no indolence or carelessness shall interfere

[1] [Compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 239; and on the importance of thirteenth-century art, Vol. XII. p. 108, Vol. XVI. p. 276.]

[2] [For a collection of passages on Restoration, see the General Index, *s.v.*]

with the stability of a building, and that no unauthorized person shall interfere with it, he supposed they were all agreed upon. An important question was whether a cathedral could be properly restored. Not that there was any want of capacity on the part of our architects of the present day, for he believed that there was as much genius and talent amongst architects now as there ever was.

5. After referring to the importance of the *ecclesia*, the speaker said they should see whether they could get the sympathy of their own people before they attempted to influence the actions of the people of France. What power had they as copyists? What power had any man as a copyist? Supposing they had the best architects in the world, could they rebuild a cathedral as it had been built? Whatever good work there was in a cathedral was the result of a good strong hand and mind. All good art was the expression of the whole man—of his soul and heart, of his intellect, and of the whole power of his body.[1] The whole personal power and energy of the body were required, as well as the power and energy of the soul. This was certain, that no great work of art existed which did not give some expression of the mind of the man at work; it was the handwriting of the thing. Now, he was not prepared to say how far that handwriting could be put upon art. He was much attached to the thirteenth-century buildings; in some thirteenth-century work there was the expression of as tender a feeling, and of as high genius, as was ever put upon stone or canvas. And he believed the peculiar characteristic of the thirteenth century was not its severity, plainness, nor its soul-stiffness or persistence, but its tenderness. Some people called Dante a monster, while Dante was simply the most tender of all poets.[2] So they had also thought the thirteenth-century architecture might be carried out by rule, instead of looking at the infinitely far more precious thing, the mark of the real tenderness and glory of the human soul in every touch. So it was in poetry of the age of Dante. They would see how general the character of the tenderness was. The thirteenth-century sculpture had in its touch that which nothing could replace, unless the same tenderness were shown. Could one man follow out the thoughts of another, and put the thoughts of the same mind and depth in the restoration of a building as he who made the building? They might copy the autographs of their friends or of all the great men in England, in the British Museum or elsewhere, but assuredly they could not do anything of that kind in sculpture. The necessity of restoration involved the impossibility of restoration; they might put a head on a figure if the head were off; they put on a new one, and that was not a restoration, but it was a substitution of the nineteenth-century impression. They might talk of restoration, but it was an impossibility in sculpture; they might as well talk of raising the dead. As he understood, what they were to do that night was to determine what should be done in respect of French restoration.

6. After some observations on this point, the speaker proceeded to say that the whole question was how they were to recover the vitality of

[1] [Compare *The Queen of the Air*, § 105 (above, p. 391).]
[2] [On the tenderness of Dante, see Vol. IV. p. 257.]

architecture and lose as little as possible of its impression. They could get a municipality to restore a cathedral, but they could not get a municipality to build a new one. The great matter was to replace a decayed stone by a good sound stone, but they ought not to put in a single stone with sculpture upon it; let every bit of old sculpture be retained, but not a bit of new stone put in with sculpture upon it. He disapproved of their taking any step in the way of finding fault with what their French neighbours were doing, and thought they should determine rather what they should themselves set as a wholesome example.

II

COMPETITION AND MECHANICAL ART[1]

1. The lecturer commenced his address by stating that ill-health and a pressure of work had prevented him from being with them as often as he could have wished; but he had the satisfaction of knowing that they had very good masters in Messrs. Lowes Dickinson, Jeffrey, and Cave-Thomas.[2] When he was with them he also felt that he was not exactly the person they wanted. He could best illustrate what he meant by telling them a thing which struck him very much at the time he attended the classes. One of the best men in his class gave him great satisfaction by the execution of his work, which made him think his pupil had a great perception of beauty. He exhibited much tenderness and grace in his expression. He (Mr. Ruskin) believed most of them grumbled because he did not praise them enough; still, he thought they would do him the justice of saying that he grumbled at his own work as well as at theirs. He was a grumbler generally. However, one day he said to this student that his work was very good—very nice. On hearing this the student fell back in his chair and laughed almost like a child. He was intensely delighted with the praise. Now, he watched them more closely after that, and saw how strongly the love of praise and the instinct of competition were in their minds; that it was not so much a love of what they did as the delight either in the personal sense of having done it well, to which there was no objection, or the doing it better than others. This was a sense which was greatly encouraged in us by many of our teachers and the very method of education. There was not a girl, boy, or man who was not urged forward to do better than his neighbour, and they all took that poisonous stimulus and swallowed it as if it were as sweet as sugar. He did not say that they did not compete in a brotherly way; but they enjoyed the competition more than anything else.[3]

[1] [An address delivered by Ruskin at the Working Men's College, Great Ormond Street, on November 18, 1865. Reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, November 21, 1865. The report was reprinted in *Igdrasil* for December 1891, vol. iii. pp. 179–181, and also in the privately issued *Ruskiniana*, part ii., 1892, pp. 200–202. The paragraphs are here numbered for convenience of reference.]

[2] [On Mr. Lowes Dickinson, see Vol. V. p. xxxviii. He worked as assistant-master under Ruskin, and then succeeded to the mastership of the class; he has contributed his reminiscences of the class to the records of *The Working Men's College*, 1854–1904, edited by J. Ll. Davies, 1904, pp. 34 *seq.* Mr. Jeffrey was an assistant-master, and Mr. Cave-Thomas in turn succeeded Mr. Dickinson (see *ibid.*, pp. 37, 38).]

[3] [For other passages in which Ruskin discourages competition and rivalry, see Vol. VII. p. 460, Vol. XVI. pp. 373, 469, Vol. XVIII. p. 319.]

2. This was a feeling which he observed to be strong amongst them and it was a feeling which would prevent them from ever excelling in any great and noble thing. They could not enjoy their work so long as they were thinking whether they were doing it better than Jones or Robinson by their side. These remarks did not apply to drawing only, but also to many things in trade. It was not the love of money—although we loved it in England, yet we were not misers on the whole—but it was the love of gain which set our rich men scrambling for money like so many pigs rooting up the ground. It was the love of gaining more than their fellow-pigs. The place of every man was fixed when he was born, by his race, by his circumstances, by the will of the Spirit who made him. His head would be of such a shape and his muscles of such a strength, and no will of man could change his being. All he could do was to make the best of it. He might make the best or the worst of his being, but he could not make himself another creature, nor compete with another creature. The only thing for him to do was to make the best use he could of the gifts which had been given to him. They sometimes held each other's hands, but they did not become each other. A chain was kept together by links, some small, some large; but all must be sound, or the chain would not hold together. So far as they could compete with anybody, they should remember that they could only do so with equals. There would be no struggle in a game of chess between Morphy and himself,[1] nor would there be between Ross and the youngest of the beginners in their rifle corps.[2] There could only be a struggle between equals. But if they only watched their equals they would not raise themselves. They must look up as high as they could. They could star-gaze as much as they pleased, but then they could not compete with the stars.

3. There was, however, one kind of competition which had a good part belonging to it; and there was nothing which was very deadly in its abuse that had not a virtue in its use. The abuse would soon be found out if there were no good at the bottom of it. They would soon throw aside arsenic if there were no good in it—there was some virtue in blue pill, and they occasionally took it; but they did not live on blue pill. So competition was good to try their strength. There was a pleasure in racing and boxing; but it consisted in its being a mere trial of skill, and not from a desire of victory.

4. If they could only compete with their equals, so could they only do so in certain things. They could not in matters of the brain. In purely mechanical works they could. If he were to give up the whole of his life to match, say, a Camberwell 'busman in his jokes, he could not do it; but if this same 'busman were to devote himself to compete with him in the mechanical part of drawing he could accomplish it. It was a great deal of this which at present drove them into the mechanical part of art.

[1] [Paul Charles Morphy (1837–1884), an American chess champion, whose feats had excited much admiration in this country shortly before the date of this address. For Ruskin's interest in chess, see Vol. VI. p. 85, Vol. XIII. p. 259.]

[2] [Captain Horatio Ross (1801–1886), M.P.; captain of the Scottish team in the match for the Elcho Shield, 1862; took part in the match five times.]

We were so mechanical that workmen allowed themselves to be called hands, and never thought of asking anybody to call them heads. They knew there must be an awful truth at the bottom of it. From high to low they were losing their ideas of beauty in following after dexterity. While he could get any amount of skill, patience, and perseverance, and obtain marvellous things from the hand, there was not the delight in beauty, which was exactly the thing he wanted to bring to them. He was not complaining of the greatest possible skill of hand, but that the mechanical should be allowed to usurp the place of beauty, intellect, and passion.

5. It was not among them only that this was taking place, but also among the highest artists. They might see on the walls of the Academy many thoroughly able pictures, magnificent in power, for there were men amongst us capable of being as great artists as there were in this world; but they were kept down by the habit of consulting the public taste and following the sympathies of others, instead of doing that which they knew to be right. Much of that which was in the Academy was prettiness, not beauty. There were the noblest examples of human beauty both in men and women around us; yet with these noble and lovely creations we were content with vile and vulgar realizations. He had not seen a beautiful English girl painted, nor a noble English man.

6. Mr. Ruskin proceeded in a very humorous way to illustrate his argument, and then pointed out the difference between Greek and English art, as shown in coins of the two peoples. For this purpose he had admirably drawn two Greek coins on a large scale, which were exhibited in the room. One was a coin of Camarina, a town on the south coast of Sicily, and coined about 400 B.C. The subject of it was the head of Hercules, with the skin of the Nemean lion, with its mouth and head as his helmet.[1] The lecturer, after minutely describing the beautiful manner in which the subject had been treated, as well as its being a record of an event, distributed a number of "farthings," the mechanical execution of which he highly approved of, but which, he said, was lamentably deficient in beauty of design. The object appeared to be to say that Britannia was powerful: then there was a figure with a trident, sitting upon something which was hidden by a shield. The only thing entirely our own was a ship and lighthouse, which had been made very small. Above all these was a noble piece of information, a grand legend, a divine motto —"Farthing," in very fine letters, as big as Britannia's head. Seriously, these "letters" were exquisitely done—nothing could be better; but still the great thing told was that it was a "farthing." How different was the treatment of the Greek coins! In this one, belonging to Camarina, they could with a microscopical glass see that word, but so artistically disguised that the letters formed a part of the beautiful design as a whole —quite subordinate, yet auxiliary. In this they had a complete essence, the harmony of all Greek art. The second coin illustrated was one from the city of Tarentum, which was also equally exquisite in its symbolical design.[2]

[1] [See the lecture, suggested by this coin, "The Hercules of Camarina," in *Queen of the Air*, §§ 161 *seq.*; above, pp. 410–420 *seq.*]

[2] [For references to the coins of Tarentum, see above, p. 69 *n.*]

All the great teachers of Greek art warned their students against a cultivation of mechanical art.

7. In concluding a most instructive and amusing address, Mr. Ruskin cautioned those belonging to the art classes at the Working Men's College not to overstrain themselves; they would not gain anything by it. All wholesome and good progress was achieved calmly. It was worse than useless to overstrive and overtax themselves. Which of them, by taking thought, could add one cubit unto his stature?[1] It was the mere story of Procrustes' bed. The real rack was when they allowed the size and nobleness of their fellows to torment them to try and rival them. They must not suppose that they who came there for a few hours could rival great artists, but they could learn to express their thoughts in an intelligible and pleasant way. They might, if they liked, consider this place as a wholesome public-house, where they came to drink moderately. They could only drink well when they drank moderately.

8. He hoped that before long there would be working men's museums, in which they would have a sufficient number of good objects for them to study. The British Museum was more a depository for specimens of all that was good and beautiful than a place of study.[2] It was much better that they should have examples which they could be allowed to handle and examine than only be able to look upon in a glass case. Casts were therefore very useful to them. Besides, they did not want for examples those things which they could not reasonably hope to attain to. What was sufficiently above them to enable them to reach it was what they wanted. He wanted museums for working men at night, possessing a quantity of things which they could use; not too many things, but what they had good, in rooms well ventilated and well lighted.

9. Above all, let them gain as men, and not as mere hands. It was not by being too good or too clever that they could make the best of themselves. He believed there was actually more harm done by "good" men than by evil. Let them look at the war in America, and the revolt in Jamaica.[3] Be good first, and wise afterwards. What a noble saying was that of Epictetus, "I was a slave, and in my body sick even to the death, and in penury, a beggar—and beloved of the gods!"[4] Beloved of the gods! That was one of the grandest things ever written by the human mind.

After again urging them not to neglect a cultivation of true beauty while seeking after dexterity in mechanical execution, Mr. Ruskin resumed his seat amidst loud applause. In the course of his address he read a passage from a work which he will shortly publish, which contained very sarcastic remarks upon some modern "institutions."[5]

[1] [Matthew vi. 27.]

[2] [Compare the lecture on "National Art," above, pp. 219 *seq.*]

[3] [On these subjects, see Vol. XVII. pp. 476 *seq.*, and Vol. XVIII. pp. 550 *seq.*]

[4] [Compare Vol. VI. p. 22, and Vol. XVII. p. 522.]

[5] [The passage was presumably from *The Crown of Wild Olive* (published in the following year), where he discusses "Working Men's Institutes," and asks how they are supposed to differ from "Idle Men's Institutes" (see Vol. XVIII. p. 402).]

III

THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL OF ART[1]

MR. RUSKIN addressed the students, complimenting them with discrimination on the progress which they had made in the study of art. He had watched the progress of the school, and regretted that he had not been able to devote more time and attention to giving advice and assistance when required of him. Agreeing to some extent with the opinion of the hon. chairman as to the lesson to be learned from the useful and agreeable refreshment room of a railway station, he could not but think that art was misplaced when applied to a place where everybody was in a hurry. He thought art itself should, however, be refreshing in its character, no matter under what circumstances it was applied. Art should be run after open-eyed, not open-mouthed. The most beautiful works of art were always done in youth, and he advised those who heard him to do whatever they did with hearty goodwill, and with an endeavour to make it faultless. He advised them to study carefully what he called "the three-legged stool of art"—viz., form, shade, and colour. If they worked and studied earnestly, they must live on bread and water during their early days, but they would in the end feed upon ambrosia.

[1] [Remarks made on July 18, 1868, at the distribution of prizes to the successful students of the West London School of Art, held in the lecture-room of the Geological Museum, Jermyn Street, under the presidency of Mr. Beresford Hope, M.P. The remarks were reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, July 20, 1868; reprinted in *Igdrasil* for December 1891, vol. iii. p. 187, and also in the privately issued *Ruskiniana*, part ii., 1892, p. 210.]

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